

The battle for freedom is never done,
and the field is never quiet.

—H. W. Nevins.

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CONTENTS.

Ourselfs and Others by Abraham Solomon	..	1
What is Yoga? by R. D. Karve		3
Karve's Opium by Critique	.. ..	5
Sir S. Radhakrishnan at the Agra University Convocation by a Student	.. ..	9
A Party to Dr. C. L. D'Aveine	.. ..	10
History and Films by Pothan Joseph	.. ..	13
Science and Church of Rome by 'Observateur'	.. ..	15
Reviews	.. ..	17
Notes and News	.. ..	17

OURSELVES AND OTHERS

Fear not the tyrants shall rule for ever,
Or the priests of the bloody faith;
They stand on the brink of that mighty river,
Whose waves they have tainted with death;
It is fed from the depths of a thousand dells;
Around them it foams, and rages, and swells;
And their swords and their sceptres floating see;
Like wrecks in the surge of eternity.

—SHELLEY.

THE eventful days of 1941 have joined the pages of history. A new year has dawned with the struggle growing grimmer every hour. Truly from China to Peru and even in Honolulu and sunny Miami one hears the groans of a tortured humanity. The descendants of the sun god have joined hands with the votaries of Wotan and Thor in an attempt to blackout civilization. But behind this avalanche of destruction and comic combination of gods there swells the battle-cry of the common people to smash up fascism, imperialism and all other forms of exploitation by man and god. The struggle is not only raging on the battlefields of the world but also in the world of ideas. We, the Rationalists of India, stand by the progressive peoples of the world shoulder to shoulder with them in this titanic struggle—the greatest the world has ever known. To our comrades the world over, we send our humble greetings as an earnest of our determination to achieve the task this epoch has imposed upon us.

Freedom and progress were neither achieved nor maintained by mere wishing. The constant repetition of that ancient refrain "A happy and prosperous new year" will not usher in happiness or

prosperity. The struggle is a reality, and purposeful action the key to success. Such action signifies rational thought, an intense campaign of education and enlightenment, the utmost unity of the progressive peoples of the world and concerted action.

We stand against fascism in all its forms. We are opposed to a system that idolizes war and the law of the jungle; that suppresses the fundamental liberties of the people, and regiments whole nations for achieving the diabolical desires of a few militarists and financiers. We are opposed to a system that seeks to suppress the scientific spirit of fearless inquiry and inculcates a blind obedience to a hierarchy of fuhrers, which seeks to destroy equality and fellow-feeling in a flood of racial arrogance.

There are many in India who, as a result of their intense hatred of British rule, tend to look upon German or Japanese fascism with indifference. In impotent rage against the arrogance of officialdom and imperialist exploitation they become just anti-British and pro-everyone who is anti-British. This is a very dangerous tendency. Intellectual and social progress is not possible in India unless we resist fascism just as much as we hate our present position. The Rationalists of India have a great role to play in making our people realize the true nature of fascism without in any way lining up with the existing forms of intellectual and social reaction. We have to impress upon our fellow-Rationalists and friends in Great Britain and America that they have a supreme task in making their people realize the immediate necessity of destroying all forms of intellectual and social reaction still persisting within their own empires.

We have to wage a relentless struggle against religious mysticism and communal fanaticism in India. The last year has witnessed many communal riots and a temporary advance of forces seeking to

vivisection India. At a time when a federation of free peoples of the world is imperative for the achievement of international peace it is indeed highly depressing to find parties advocating the subdivision of India into theocratic States mutually hostile to one another. It is depressing to see the religious prejudices of the people being roused to serve the ends of scheming politicians. We, Rationalists, must oppose all those who seek to impose one religion over another or divide India, and must lead a campaign for a secular State and a scientific education.

The malignant institution of caste, though battered by the impact of industrial civilization, still remains with us. This institution must be totally abolished. For this the whole religious ideology of mediæval India must be superseded by a rational and scientific outlook. Here is a great task, Indian Rationalists!

There is a serious dearth of literature analysing and exposing the sociological roots and manifold misconceptions of the two great religions of India—Hinduism and Islam. Rationalism cannot make any great headway unless this problem is immediately solved. Adequate funds and competent men must be found for this task. The Rationalist Association of India must win the support and canalize the efforts of all those who represent the new intellectual ferment now visible in many centres of learning in India. The services of eminent scientists, educationists and writers who stand for a scientific outlook on life must be obtained and adequate help given them. Only then will the Rationalist Association of India become a powerful organization for the cause of intellectual, social and cultural progress.

These are but a few of the manifold tasks we have before us. Let us apply ourselves to them with consistency and courage.

.. .. . Abraham Solomon.

WHAT IS YOGA?

By R. D. KARVE

THE root meaning of "Yoga" is "union". It is also the name of a system of philosophy which teaches the means by which the human soul may be completely united with the Supreme Spirit and thus secure absolution, that is, freedom from the cycle of births and deaths in which the soul is supposed to be entangled. Elaborate rules are given for the practice of Yoga, which, apart from its ultimate object, is also supposed to give extraordinary powers to the person who practises it. For instance, what are known as the eight magical powers: (1) the power of reducing oneself to a minute size, (2) increasing enormously in size, (3) becoming extremely light in weight, (4) irresistible will-power, (5) obtaining anything at will, (6) greatness in anything, (7) power of fascinating people, (8) death at will. There is a story in which the wife of Shiva, one of the Hindu trinity, enraged at the insult offered to her husband by her father, burnt herself in a fire produced on the spot by her Yogic power. Fancy an all-powerful god being insulted by his father-in-law and his wife thereupon committing suicide!

However, these powers are not the main object of yogic practices, as may be seen from a radio talk given on the subject in August 1940 by Swami Kuvālayanand, the head of the institution known as the Kaivalyadhama, situated on the Chaupati seaface. The institution is intended to give practice in physical exercises which are undoubtedly useful to people with large corporations and to others who may desire to keep themselves fit, apart from any spiritual benefits that may be claimed for them. The greater part of the Swami's discourse is very sensible, even from the

rationalist point of view. Says he, "You have probably seen people sleeping on pointed nails fixed into planks, or who can swallow acids or pins and broken glass or even serpents, or have themselves buried in the ground. None of these physical feats can be included in Yoga. Yoga is the name given to exercises which procure perfect health to the body, the greatest possible happiness to the mind and the full development of the spiritual powers of the soul, and to the philosophy which advocates these exercises. This philosophy therefore gives rules of behaviour that lead to complete physical, mental and spiritual development, and the student will find its principles acceptable to reason. People will naturally ask me what I think of the superhuman and supernatural powers attributed to Yogis. From my study of books on this science, I can say that real Yogis have never anywhere claimed powers that can really be considered superhuman or supernatural. Since these powers can be acquired by human beings by means of certain practices, it is definitely proved that they can in no sense be called superhuman. Nor can they be called supernatural, since the rules of nature are constant and unchangeable. It is definitely stated that any powers acquired by these means still remain subject to the laws of nature. It is obvious that if every Yogi could go against the laws of nature, the order of the world would be seriously disturbed". (I am giving the sense of the discourse and not the exact words even when I use inverted commas).

"I think that when a Yogi claims to have second sight, even that is not supernatural. To give an illustration, a man's sight is

limited by the construction of his eye. According to Patanjali (the author of the system known as Yoga), a Yogi can see without the help of his eye, so that his sight is unimpeded by obstructions or by distance. The same applies to other organs".

"I may then be asked whether there is any scientific evidence of such extra-sensory powers obtained by Yogis. To this question, my answer is partly affirmative and partly negative. I must admit that nowhere has anybody undertaken a scientific investigation of such powers, and consequently there is no evidence that will force even sceptical scientists to accept the possibility of such powers. On the other hand, we must remember that all religions which have obtained such a grip on the human mind are based precisely on these extra-sensory perceptions. Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, Christians and Muslims, all believe what they do on the strength of extra-sensory experiences which are described in the Hindu Philosophy known as Yoga. The combined evidence of the founders of all these religions is so powerful that even a scientific sceptic will not be able to declare them false without any proof. Not only these founders, but also the saints of every age have proclaimed such supersensory experiences. If we also include the present experiences of persons who are spiritually advanced, I am sure enough material will be found for a thorough scientific investigation. Huge amounts are spent on investigations in other branches of knowledge. Why should similar sums not be spent on the investigation of Yoga? I am sure that if this is done, the truth of extra-sensory perception will be established. . . ."

I have quoted the Swami at such length because he is considered a modern authority on Yoga, and, apart from the obvious fallacy of his argument, his attitude is rationalistic.

The evidence on which the Swami relies

to justify a belief in Yoga is scientifically worth nothing, because the sum of a number of zeros is always zero, and every unit of the cumulative evidence he gives is equal to zero. It is true that saints as well as founders of religions have claimed not only extra-sensory perception, but even direct communication with God or gods. It must not be forgotten, however, that saints have always described God or gods according to their religions. Christians and Muslims will describe their only god, while Hindu saints have described particular Hindu gods to whom they may be attached. These Hindu saints always see their god in the special form and the peculiar dress and equipment attributed to him or her by popular tradition. Thus Tukaram describes the god in the temple at Pandharpur with his arms akimbo and his wife standing by his side. Other religious devotees have similar evidence of having seen god with their own eyes, but the god is always in the special form in which the devotee is accustomed to worship him. Is this worth anything as evidence? These are simply day-dreams or hallucinations and the gods thus seen are creatures of the imaginations of the saints, which work in their individual ways. No importance can be attached to such evidence except as a pathological phenomenon which should interest students of psychology and it would be a waste of money to spend anything on an investigation which has not the slightest chance of realizing the fond hopes of the Swami by providing a scientific basis for his belief in extra-sensory perception.

As rationalists, we may not accept the Swami's statements about the soul or the spiritual advantages to be derived from the practice of Yoga, but we have to congratulate him on his attitude, which would welcome a scientific investigation instead of demanding Faith, and also on the very useful practical instruction he is providing at his institution.

KARVE'S OPIUM

By CRITIQUE

MR. KARVE who claims to be a scholar and a rationalist has let himself go against Poor old Marx. In his article entitled "Marxist's opium," in the last issue of the "Reason," he piles up assertions after assertions, delightfully innocent of the necessity of valid arguments and with a wanton disregard for what Marx actually said or did in his lifetime. Here are a few of these assertions in which Mr. Karve accuses Marx of being a believer in automatic changes in society.

"Though he (Marx) was wrong in predicting that economical developments automatically lead to proletarian innovations.....". (P. 185).

"One wonders in fact why communists should be so anxious about their revolution if their prophet Marx has laid it down that the proletarian revolution is going to be automatic, not only without help from them but in spite of all opposition" (P. 185).

Marx, unlike his armchair critics spent his whole lifetime in organising and leading the working class of Europe. The architect of the First International, he who proclaimed the watch word "Workers of the world unite, you have nothing to lose but your chains", the leader who taught the working class that they can capture power only by a revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist State, will be called a believer in "automatic" changes in society only by one who is proud of his offensive ignorance.

In his life and work Marx fully endorsed the famous dictum of Goethe that "In the beginning was the Deed". A few

quotations from Marx would amply bear out what Marx actually said on the question.

"The primary supposition of all history is, of course *living human individual beings*. The facts which must first of all be investigated are, therefore, these individuals in their bodily *organisation*, and in the relation between this organisation and the rest of Nature. All historical investigation must start from these natural foundations and their *modification* in the course of human history by the *action of human beings*". (German Ideology).

There is no living being which is not engaged in some activity, be it only to sit on an armchair and criticise others for what they have not said. There is no 'organisation' which is the product of mere wishing and no 'relation' which is not subject to modification by the activities of the inter-related elements. There is no history without human activity; this is the elementary principle of Marxism. "For Marx and Dialectical Materialism, *Practice i.e. what men do*, is the basis of all development in objective history and in man's subjectivity likewise." (Jackson *Dialectico*. P. 190).

"In history at every stage there exists a material outcome, a sum of productive forces, a historically created relation to nature, and a historically created relation of individuals one to another which outcome is handed down to each successive generation by its predecessor. Hence in each stage of history there is a mass of productive forces, capitals, which, while they are in fact *modified* by the new generation, also, and on the other hand *prescribe* to the

new generation its conditions of living and thus give it its definite development, its specific character. *Thus circumstances make men as much as men make circumstances.*" (*German Ideology*)

"Man makes his own history, but he does not make it out of the whole cloth. He makes it out of conditions, not such as he himself has chosen but out of such as lie ready to his hand. The traditions of all past generations weigh like an Alp upon the brain of the living. At the very time when men are absorbed in revolutionising things and themselves, in bringing about what never before was—at very such epochs of revolutionary crisis they conjure up and enlist in their service the ghosts of the past, assume their names and their battle cries and costumes that the new historic spectacle may be enacted in time honoured guise and with borrowed language." (*Eighteenth Brumaire*).

Here is a clear affirmation that the source of all history is this active inter-relation between human activity and material environment. The problem before Marx was not whether human activity was essential to history. Such absurd questions are posed only by metaphysicians. The problem as raised and answered by Marx was why men wanted to do the things they did do—or alternatively why they did them if they did not wish to. Marx started with the historical fact that mankind responded at every stage to an inherited material environment with certain desires and activity for the achievement of those desires, that such activity in turn changed the material environment which in turn was responded to by mankind with new desires, and activities. His problem was to find whether this movement of action and reaction in its totality conformed to any law, and consequently to find out

what men should do to purposefully control this process. Hence his famous declaration that the function of philosophy is not merely to explain the world but also to change it. This is not advocating "automatic change" but quite the reverse.

"In considering such transformation (periods of social revolution) we must always distinguish between the material changes in the economic conditions of production.....and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic, or philosophical forms in which human beings become conscious of the conflict and fight it to an issue." (Marx, *Critique of Political Economy*).

This passage bears out that the revolutionary crisis in the struggle between capitalists and proletariat arises not automatically, independently of human wishes or activity but because of it. There can be no doubt that Marx expected the proletarian revolution to arrive in the form of a historical process of class conflict. In the words of Jackson "if class conflict and triumph therein does not involve both wishing and action (and plenty of it!), words have ceased to convey a meaning."

With a complete disdain for facts Mr. Karve asserts: "Marx himself was so sure about this (revolution) that he has hardly given any practical instructions as to how the revolution is to be engineered, or what is to be done after the workers have succeeded in taking possession of the means of production. Difficulties are to resolve themselves automatically, so why should he care to say anything about them? Marx calls this science, but no scientist will agree with him." It would seem that in the opinion of Mr. Karve, the best critic of an author is one who has never cared to read any of his works. Would it be an act of discourtesy if I were to ask Mr. Karve

to read the "*Communist Manifesto*," "*Class struggles in France*," "*Eighteenth Brumaire*," the "*Paris Commune*" and the "*Das Capital*" before he calls Marx a confounded fool. Would it be too much to ask him also to read Lenin's classic work, "*State and Revolution*", wherein he brilliantly explains the principles enunciated by Marx in the first four of the above-mentioned books? If he would be patient enough to read them he would not make such accusations against Marx. Marx never set out to "engineer" a revolution. What he set out to do was to make the working class fully conscious of the class war which they were fighting with only partial consciousness. He wanted them to consciously organise their struggle in alliance with the peasantry and speedily march to the only possible conclusion of the struggle, viz., the defeat of the capitalist class and the creation of a new economic and political structure. Marx clearly laid down the main lines of the strategy and tactics of proletarian struggle and revolution and of the State to be established by a victorious proletariat. He laid down the line of development as far as the historical experience of his time permitted him to do so. In the Paris Commune, the world had the first historic experience of working class attempting to create a new State. True to his scientific approach to all problems, he studied this concrete historical experience and drew from it conclusions as to what form the proletarian State would and should take and what programme it should follow. What has been generally stated in the *Communist Manifesto* was clarified by the historic experience of the course of class war in France and he has embodied his study of each experience in the books "*Class struggle in France*", "*Eighteenth Brumaire*" and *Paris*

Commune." Each of these represents an advance on the previous one and the general lessons of these studies are explained by Lenin in "*State and Revolution*." Lenin whom Karve discribes with such easy-going conscience as an anti-Marxist, based his entire strategy of revolution on these historical lessons as drawn out by Marx. Owing to lack of space it is not possible to give in this article even a summary of these great works of Marx and Lenin.

Mr. Karve has little knowledge of the growth and functions of the Communist Party of Russia. He calls it a party of professional revolutionists. But does he know from what class the majority of its members came, or to the interests of which class the party owed its allegiance? In other words what is the social composition and what is the social objective of the party? The Communist Party is the party of the most class-conscious and revolutionary section of the proletariat and its function is to make the entire working class revolutionary. It draws the large bulk of its members from the working class and it stands as the defender of the interests of the proletariat as a class which includes also the leadership of the peasantry in the revolutionary struggle against the capitalist State. This does not mean that all the members of the party should be from the proletariat. Mr. Karve is prepared to admit that this party succeeded in educating the proletariat of Russia to see that Revolution would benefit them. But because this proletariat did not wake up one morning and find themselves revolutionary, because they had to be educated by the party of the most advanced section of their class through organising and leading their struggles, Mr. Karve would say that the working class of Russia did not play the decisive part in the revolution of 1917. It would seem that

according to him, the Communist Party by *itself* carried through the revolution while the people of Russia—the workers and peasants—passively looked on. One would have thought that though Karve may not have read big fat tomes on the history of the Russian Revolution he would have at least read John Rebd's famous book "*Ten days that shook the world*". The gigantic movement of a whole people, the tremendous revolutionary struggle of the Russian working class and peasantry against their internal enemies and against the internationalist armies of all the imperialist nations of the world, this titanic upheaval of a whole people inhabiting one sixth of the world's land surface, this great historic event which shook the whole of human society and still shakes it, is to Mr. Karve just a simple event engineered and carried through solely by a few lakhs of members of the Communist Party—an event in which the people had no conscious aims, no revolutionary intentions and played no revolutionary part. This is indeed a pathetic sight. Blind prejudice can reach no greater height.

The Communist Party of Russia was not an isolated grouping—not a set of intellectual aristocrats disdainfully looking down upon mankind from the top of their ivory towers. It sprang from the people, it had its core in the revolutionary working class, and its steadfast allies in the awakened peasantry. It was the party of the most revolutionary and resolute section of the people and it led them to their victory. Lenin worked and succeeded on the principle that the proletariat by their class position must through their historic experience of class struggles become revolutionary, and to him the Communist Party was the expression of the most revolutionary section of the proletariat,

leading and educating that class and loyal to the interests of that class.

Mr. Karve seems to have a lot of confusion as to the process by which the proletariat becomes revolutionary. He asserts that "the workers by themselves are never revolutionary, that they tend rather to compromise with capitalists by means of Trade Unions and so improve their own position, so that they never become desperate enough to rise in revolt, because capitalists are wise enough to see that it is better to a certain extent to yield to their demands. Thus the position of workers has constantly improved in England owing to such compromises and there is not the slightest possibility of a proletarian revolution there." Marx never said that the workers would automatically at their very birth as a class become revolutionary. Jackson in his book *Dialectics* has summarised the various stages by which revolutionary consciousness grows among the working class. "Marx distinguishes broadly three phases in the historical development of the proletarian struggle. At first while still an aggregation of individuals, differentiated only from the craftsmen, small producers and peasantry of the past feudal era, by the seemingly personal and individual accident of misfortune, the proletariat riots and struggles as an impoverished 'mob' to win back the status of small producers in town or country it has lost. During all the period of the Industrial Revolution, and in large measure supplying the mass support for Chartism, the proletarian struggle remained largely imprisoned within these small producers' illusions and aspirations. This is the first and backward looking phase in the historical development of the proletarian struggle.

(Please turn to page 19)

SIR S. RADHAKRISHNAN AT THE AGRA UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION

By A STUDENT

THE other day I was also present at the Agra University Convocation as one of the recipients of the B.Sc. degree and carefully heard the Convocation address delivered by Sir S. Radhakrishnan, Vice-Chancellor of the Benares University. What led me to concentrate on his speech, were two things mentioned by the Vice-Chancellor of our University during his introduction: first that he was coming from Dacca (a place whose inhabitants exemplify the lowest limit of degradation that Religion is capable of bringing to mankind), and second that he was a scholar of comparative religion. The latter suggestion made me specially alert because it could either mean a lot or nothing at all.

What leads me to write this is the suggestion of a student of the Benares University who met me at a photographer's shop the same evening and had a spirited discussion with me in favour of his Vice-Chancellor, Sir S. Radhakrishnan and finally wound up by becoming too profound to be articulate and patting my shoulder in pity as if I were a hopelessly lost modern youth. For the information of those who might scoff at my criticism, as did the student of that University, I want to add that although a science graduate is not expected to meddle with the study of comparative religion, I happen to be a student of that subject in the jack-of-all-trades sense.

Sir S. Radhakrishnan began his speech with the lacks and imperfections of our education system and with a charitable reference to the ladies who were present at the Convocation. He said, "They had less opportunity and more difficulties to face in life after getting their degrees than

the young men," and after this remark he disregarded them altogether. His saying that the educated young ladies had less opportunity—as earning units—is totally wrong. The ladies actually have better opportunity than the young men when they become graduates. *I can prove this with statistics.* His minimising the opportunity of the educated ladies only shows this: He never cared to study their possibilities and perhaps he is one of the champions of the segregation of sexes in India. He wanted to discourage them because he probably wished to keep them at home, in the kitchen and the maternity chambers. His complete disregard of them in the rest of the speech also points to this.

Then he went on to war, to the aims of the belligerent nations, and then to the causes of the war. He said that the causes of the present war were "too much knowledge, too much secularism." Then with his pet formula to "go a little deeper" he proceeded to reveal to us that the underlying cause of this war was the "want of realisation of the intrinsic value of man". What, one would ask, is the meaning of this "intrinsic value of man"? Perhaps he will become too profound to be articulate like that student of his University and pat the shoulders of the questioner in pity.

Next he came to the equality of opportunity but shrunk from expanding upon it lest he might be accused of preaching "Democracy"* to the University students! Then he went on to the superiority of the so-called Indian Culture—a continuation

*Democracy is in inverted commas because it is used in the sense in which H. G. Wells uses it in his "The Fate of Homo Sapiens."

A Party to Dr.

ON Thursday 4th December 1941 a number of members and friends of Dr. C. L. D'Avoine gathered in the Hall at Standard Building, Hornby Road, Bombay, to congratulate him on his 66th birthday for his long and unstinted services to the cause of Rationalism and the Rationalist Association of India.

Among those present were, Dr. Erulkar, Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, Dr. George Coelho, Prof. R. D. Karve, Miss Irene D'Avoine, Mr. V. D. Satghare, Dr. M. G. Pradhan, Miss Passanah, Mr. J. Ezekiel, Mr. Siraj A. Neemachwalla, Miss Alice D'Avoine, Mr. Zakaria Wally Mahomed, Mr. Abraham Solomon and several others.

Dr. A. S. ERULKAR.

LADIES & GENTLEMEN,

You all know why we have gathered here this evening. It is to congratulate Dr. D'Avoine on his 66th birthday for his admirable services to the cause of Rationalism and the Rationalist Association. I do not consider age as a question of years. I think it is more a matter of how one feels. A person may be twenty-six and yet feel like an old man of 66. There may be a person of 70 who has the energy and enthusiasm of a man of 26. We shall not call Dr. D'Avoine our grand old man but rather we think of him as one who has rendered such invaluable services to the cause of Rationalism. I rather think of him as a man of 36. I will now ask Dr. Coelho to say a few words on this occasion (Applause).

Dr. GEORGE COELHO.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

It is with great pleasure that I associate myself with the tribute paid to Dr. D'Avoine by our President Dr. Erulkar.

Dr. D'Avoine has been an exponent of truth. Ever since he felt convinced that the claims of dogmatic religion could not be sustained, he has been a missionary working for a rational outlook on life and its problems. His mental integrity is of such a high standard that he could not be "cautious" about his "free views" on religion; he openly declared them; his house ceased to be a Catholic household. To my knowledge one of his early open conflicts with the Jesuits of Bombay was in regard to the articles on Haeckel that were published by the *Examiner*, the local organ of the Jesuits. The *Examiner* wanted to prove that Haeckel was a fraud. D'Avoine, in a pamphlet smashed their case. Another occasion was when he met the activities of the late Archbishop Goodier. The latter commenced a series of lectures on Faith in the Grant Medical College under the auspices of the Sodality. D'Avoine answered him in the *Bombay Chronicle*, and refuted the claim that Faith was superior to Reason. Goodier shifted his venue to the St. Anne's Church. Since then D'Avoine has always kept his eyes open and in his capacity as a local secretary of the Rationalist Press Association used his pen to expose fallacious beliefs. We must pay a tribute to the Indian press, especially the *Bombay Chronicle* which opened its columns to these views.

Then came the Anti-Priest-Craft Association. Dr. D'Avoine took an active part in its formation and was elected the Vice-President. The Anti-Priest-Craft Association changed its name to the Rationalist Association of India. The R. A. I. then decided to publish their journal "*Reason*" and he was

entrusted with the Editorship. We are all aware how ably he edited it and the valuable and informative articles he wrote. It should not surprise any rationalist if persecution tracks his heels. Within a few years the editor of *Reason* was persecuted for wounding the religious feelings of the people in India. Dr. D'Avoine was arrested and released on bail. After an interesting trial before the Chief Presidency Magistrate he was acquitted. The Rationalist Association of India then held a special dinner to congratulate him.

Dr. D'Avoine carried on his editorial duties and succeeded Dr. Deshmukh as the President of the R. A. I., an honour which he richly deserves.

Dr. D'Avoine has been a rationalist in the right way. He has never been swayed by emotion. Though a very busy medical practitioner he always found time to read and has a large collection of rationalistic literature. He does not import heat into his discussions and since he has no bias those that discuss with him part from him never with any bitterness. Though he has in public and in private chastised the teaching of the Catholic Church he still has many good friends amongst the priests and nuns.

It is said that a professional man who has his eyes on the top of the ladder should not mix himself with religious controversies. Dr. D'Avoine did not care for this advice. He is at the top of the profession having reached there many years ago. His religious views have not affected his practice. His patients have stuck to him because they have found in him what he really is, an able, honest, friendly doctor.

The religiously inclined, particularly the priest class, always say that a man gives up his religion for wine and women. Dr. D'Avoine does not drink. He might taste a glass of wine occasionally, that's all. His private life, as a husband, a father and head of the family, is exemplary. No one can point a finger at him or throw a stone at him—not even those that have no sins. Abandoning dogmatic religion has not altered his correct mode of life even by a trifle. To us all, and particularly to those who are not rationalists, he is an example. He has shown that we can be good citizens, good fathers, good professional men and good friends without professing any religion, without being cautious about our free views.

For all this, ladies and gentlemen, we are all happy that he is with us today. In spite of his years his intellect is clear, and judgment sound. I am sure



Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D., bo-
tius and educated there and in i
ing for and propagating the cau
Editor of *Reason* from 1931 to
Association of India for three y
"hurting the religious suscepti-
1934 for certain articles publishe-
"Reason Case." but acquitted.

C. L. D'Avoine

you will all join with me in wishing him a long life and many more years. Years which I am certain he will spend in combating all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of reason.

(Applause).

ABRAHAM SOLCMON.

LADIES & GENTLEMEN,

It is with the greatest pleasure that I rise to second all that Dr. Coelho has said. I speak not only for myself but also on behalf of the younger members of the R. A. I. and particularly that group who came into contact with Dr. D'Avoine about eight years ago. I started reading Dr. D'Avoine's very lively articles and notes in *Reason* in 1933 and soon

became very anxious to meet him personally. At that time I came to know him as "The Infidel of Bombay". Perhaps many of you do not know that he was known by this name. When I went to see him I expected to see a rather young and very enthusiastic man who possessed such clarity of mind and courage as to challenge so effectively all the champions of faith and bigotry. Although I did not find a man young in age, after a few hours' conversation I did find a person who was young in spirits and could put to shame many younger men with the amount of energy and determination that he possessed.

Soon came the great blasphemy trial better known as the "Reason Case" which evoked so much comment and interest all over India. One from our group would attend the Court each day and bring the news every afternoon and evening to us at some appointed place. Not only were the authorities invoked to dress the tender religious susceptibilities of Inspector Lyons which were hurt but also were the Gods in Heaven. There were prayers so that the powers of fanaticism and bigotry may triumph.

I need not say anything about Dr. D'Avoine's activities as Dr. Coelho has already told you about them. Dr. D'Avoine has not, from the very beginning,

been very optimistic about the progress of Rationalism in India but whenever there has been any need to defend the cause of Rationalism or cross swords with the champions of mysticism and reaction, Dr. D'Avoine has always been at his post. He has defended the Rationalist cause and the R. A. I. not only in local papers but also in papers abroad wherever it has been misrepresented or attacked.

Dr. D'Avoine's activities and interest in the R. A. I. are as keen as ever, and I join with you in wishing that Dr. D'Avoine continues with us for

many years to come as a valiant fighter in a battle in which we do not leave behind mangled bodies or broken hearts, suffering or misery but help to create minds that are free, minds awakened to a new and fuller life, minds that are free from mysticism and ignorance, for it is a battle for the cause of intellectual liberty, social justice and cultural progress.

(Applause).

Dr. C. L. D'AVOINE.

LADIES & GENTLEMEN,

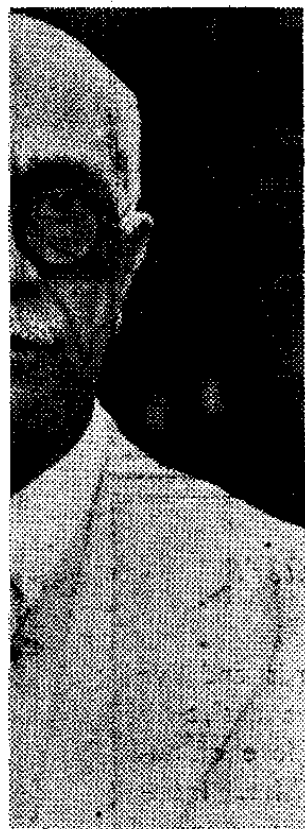
I thank you all for your kindness in coming here this evening to congratulate me on my 66th birthday for my efforts for the cause of Rationalism. I am afraid Dr. Coelho has grossly exaggerated my efforts in this respect. I have found it difficult to spread the message of freethought in India. This is not because the people are not intelligent enough to accept Rationalism but because they are more interested in political activities. Dr. Coelho has given you more or less an idea of my activities. I may tell you that I became a Rationalist at the age of twenty-six. The book that influenced me was *The Riddle of the Universe* by Ernest Haeckel. It was perhaps because I was acquainted to a certain extent with biology and my knowledge of anatomy and physiology enabled me to comprehend at once the scientific arguments of Prof. Haeckel.

One of my first tasks was to defend Darwinism against the misrepresentation of certain Jesuits in Bombay and for this I was fortunate enough in being allowed space in some of the best known Bombay dailies of those days. According to a Jesuit Father reported to be an authority on biology, Darwinism was in a parlous condition in 1908. I had very little difficulty in refuting him and exposing the hollowness of his arguments.

I did not think of forming a Society in Bombay because I had my doubts about the success of the same. When the Anti-Priest-craft Association was formed in Bombay I was asked to move one of the Resolutions on that day. I remember expressing my misgivings about the success of the association. I said I was afraid that the enthusiasm displayed on that day may prove to be a hay-stack fire that would subside soon after it flared up. To a great extent that actually happened, for most of our elders soon deserted us and the Association would have died completely had it not been for the efforts of Mr. Solomon who was determined to keep the flag flying (Applause). If we have been able to meet this evening under the auspices of the Rationalist Association of India we must thank Mr. Solomon first and his co-workers. I shall always do my utmost for the cause of Rationalism as long as I can (Applause).

At the suggestion of those present it has been decided to publish the "Reason Case" in booklet form with a portrait of Dr. C. L. D'Avoine and one copy well bound and signed by his friends to be presented to him at the 12th Annual Dinner and Reunion of the R. A. I. to be held in March 1942. Those wishing to send a contribution towards the same should send it to Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, Hon. Treasurer, Rationalist Association of India, 41 Queen's Road, Bombay 2, on or before 10th February 1942.

The following donations have already been received: Balance of contributions towards the expenses of the party Rs. 3; Dr. A. S. Erulkar, Rs. 15; Prof. H. V. Hampton, Rs. 10; Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, Rs. 10; Mr. J. R. Labelle, Rs. 5; Mr. V. D. Satghare, Rs. 2; Prof. R. D. Karve, Rs. 5; Total Rs. 50.



born on 4th December 1875 in Mauritance and Belgium. Started writing of Rationalism since about 1908. 1936. President of the Rationalists 1938 to 1940. Charged with "illies of the people" in March in *Reason*, known as the historic still an active and keen Rationalist.

of the application of his "go a little deeper" formula. He wasted a lot of emotion upon it and concluded by drawing the analogy of the realist of to-day as the man who had mistaken his shadow for reality while the source of light was behind his back. He wanted us to turn to God and Religion and disdain the material goods for the "spiritual" values. His is an escapist philosophy and his knowledge of comparative religions can amount to nothing. He came to mislead the students of our University.

In the end of his speech he asked the students to carry in life the ideology that they had developed in the University and impart it to others. Very good words but mere words and nothing else. What does he know of this ideology? I want to inform him that nothing like a common ideology exists among our University students. They bring their ideologies from their homes and the University life perfects them. Their ideologies are sectarian and flower under such atmospheres as the Christian Hostel, the Kayasth House, the Jain Boarding, the Vaish Hostel, the Chaube Hostel, to name some; and now we hear talk about a Muslim Hostel to be made if sufficient beef-eaters are forthcoming. The science and arts students form two separate communities and try to ridicule each other at every excuse. Even some of the professors are not free from this taint. If there is a common ideology at all among our students it is to create a nuisance for their fellow girl-students. Here for once the Hindus, the Muslims, the Christians, and others forget their differences in the persecution of the opposite sex. Had Sir S. Radhakrishnan delivered a lecture on the importance of real co-education it might have been of some use. But alas, that is not in him.

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HISTORY & FILMS

By **POTHAN JOSEPH**

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THERE is a vast No-Man's Land lying between Mythology and History, a region where facts are mingled with allegories and language itself is used as an enigma for elucidation by the learned. While we draw upon the past for instruction, are we not apt to carry waste-loads with us encumbering progress? Take for instance, the cinema industry which in India is drawing heavily on the primitive past and working on scenarios made out of mythological cavalades. In rewriting the history of India, savants have disagreed because there are certain pivotal episodes upon which preconceptions coloured with communalism have grown. The Black Hole story is being expunged from text-books while the record of what happened between Shivaji and Afzal Khan goes almost according to religious belief. In this atmosphere, would it, in the long-term sense, profit us to couple our entertainments with dubious history? In the long-term sense, because for ready exploitation there is hardly anything so rich as the fond beliefs of the multitude and the attachment of people to mystic tradition. Pictures touching the birth of Sri Krishna and the happenings of Brindavan quickly attract the populace and non-stop shows have been given on the subject at Kumbhmelas. Now new particularisms are being adopted as themes of cinema-production about which nation-builders should ponder with care if they do not wish to be caught napping.

The glorification of the past with a communal bias is creeping into the minds of

some producers. Stories of "forgotten empire" are being re-cast for the scene, but a romance of Rana Pratap is slowly germinating plans at the other end for an epic of Alauddin. Mr. A. B. Reddy in announcing his programme for the year promises to give us a grand version of the glory of Dravidian times with its thrill for Dravidastan or the separation of the South with a non-Brahmin terrain of existence. In the motion-picture business, the spirit of competition is keen and I observe with misgivings a tendency to cater to obsolete and disintegrating enthusiasms about a past that is gone for ever.

Our picture-houses ought to be common places of entertainment and topics of mythology have a centrifugal reaction, though they are a good box-office draw. When in Athens, I was curious to know how their mythology influenced the modern Greeks, but the subject is on the shelf as far as common life is concerned. They see pictures of modern doings but stories of Zeus, Apollo, Juno, Diana, and others who loved, married, bred and fought in the Greek pantheon are not themselves subjects of life depiction. Uplift films in Italy did without the staging of Remus, Romulus and the she-wolf. Civilization and realism should invest us with a new outlook if we regard the cinema as an educative force. Not that Homer is not a classic of which Greece is not proud, but the tales that were bright and realistic no doubt in an earlier age are reserved for scholarly study, not for re-inculcation in the minds of the credulous with pictures of the dead past.

If the picture houses of Chung-king gave large displays about the glories of the Mink Dynasty, the Chinese would be as doped with primeval ideas as they were once with opium ; their heart would not be in the fight for emancipation they are waging to-day. We should be buoyed up with the newer life, the larger hope ; and if our cinema or theatre is subtly converted into places of bhajans and seances by over-emphasis of the religious *motif*, then we are creating another fissure in our common life. Those who act on the stage and help in the art should, in my opinion, let the dead past bury its dead, and act, in the living present. There are so many vital and vibrant themes common to all which we can develop instead of bemusing ourselves and crawling back to the dim past for inspiration. The cinemachine in Russia is as good as a university for the masses, because the producers instruct and entertain ; if they had gone on fiddling over past glories (or infamies) about Holy Russia, about Peter the Great and Catherine the Great, they would still have been in the state of *moujiks* flogged with the knout and occasionally served with a little vodka to awaken them into a greater sensitiveness to the infliction of fresh pain. Let subjects pertaining to the mythological and the medieval cease to be the main plank of popular catering in our country, because I am afraid the dragon's teeth are being already sown through this medium of public instruction. Let us be more under the influence of reformism than obscurantism.

'AN ICONOCLAST AMONG THE GODS !'

Under this heading there has appeared in the 'Sunday Edition' of the *Bombay Chronicle* (of the 23rd Nov.) a review of Mr. Nadkarni's 'RAMA-RAJYA' (not *Ram Rajya*, as it is spelt in the paper).

Though the reviewer indicates his identity by his initials, it is evident from the long (though not quite unwelcome) extract from a public utterance of his own, with which he has chosen to pad his meagre article on the book, that the writer of it is Mr. N. H. Pandya, a lawyer and one of the workers of the women's rescue-home and foundling-hospital in Bombay, named the Shraddha-nand Ashram—the institution which is mentioned in the introduction to that extract.

Mr. Pandya seems in his 'semi-orthodox' wisdom to be wiser even than Vyasa and Valmiki, those well-known ancient Hindu authors. The author of RAMA-RAJYA is concerned with showing up the inadequacy (or even the errancy) of the aims of those who like the Varnasrama-Swarajists would have present-day society governed by the ideals of the 'long-past' Rama-Rajya. In doing so Mr. Nadkarni is obliged to point out the errors of the great Ramachandra, which he does, not only on the grounds of Reason and Conscience, but on the authority of Vyasa and Valmiki themselves,—as witness the former's condemnation of Rama's assassination of Vali, quoted in the book from the *Maha-Bharata*, at p. 7. For Mr. Pandya, therefore, to find fault with Mr. Nadkarni for pointing out the errors of Ramachandra on such good 'orthodox' authority (and not on grounds of Reason alone, as might be supposed) is, one may be excused for saying, going one better than such 'inspired' authors !

But, after all, Mr. Pandya's performance is much better than his precept. While in his preachy way he deprecates a modern author judging his ancients by the standards of his own day (the enlightened standards which we are all bound to follow if we will be 'true to ourselves'), the reviewer at the

SCIENCE AND THE CHURCH OF ROME

By 'OBSERVATEUR'

HOW many amongst those who threw a casual, careless or surprised glance at the *Reuter* message reporting the tribute that the Pope of Rome paid to science the other day could have discerned the well-camouflaged strategic principle and aim underlying the almost Latin platitudes of the Vicar-General of Christ on earth and *avatar* of Saint Peter?

His Holiness the Pope of Rome is known to utter profound wisdom for the faithful. This is strictly in accordance with the *Fuehrerprinzip* (Leadership principle) of his office as the head of the organized, totalitarian Church of Rome. From 'Peace Drive' to 'Grandeur that's Science' is for the *Fuehrer* of the Black International just 'routine' and it should demonstrate to us the scale of claims and pretensions that are preferred by or in behalf of the apostle-general who theoretically owns the entire earth and has been charged by a mandate of heaven to 'attract the unenlightened to Christ' that is to say himself and his hierarchy. He is the head of the Vatican department that to-day stands as the relic of the power of Papacy in European and international politics and he is also doctrinally and despite the barrage of high-sounding phrases and the simulated modesty put on and off like a costume or uniform, the spiritual Leader, Chef, Caudillo, of the entire humanity. It is a phenomenon—or spectacle of All-in-one or One-in-all. . .

Yet the history of Papacy clearly shows that if there were any organized agency that tried to destroy every idea, every aspiration and every attempt of human progress and indeed humanistic approach

based on progressive development of human thought and supremacy of Reason, it is Papacy. The European soul still remembers and shudders at the nightmare that has pursued the best and noblest minds of creative and analytical thought. What is more, the nightmare has taken a concrete shape to-day and history of the conflict that has marked the battlefields through which Reason has triumphed with the emergence of the European Renaissance is even being re-lived.

We must survey the 'ideological' background of International Fascism as well as the inter-relations with Rome of that Fascism and indeed its development in Europe to realize the strict analogy, indeed historical recurrence, that is furnished in Europe and the world to-day. We will then easily discover that Papacy is playing its eternal role in international affairs to-day. A careful study of the utterances of the Pope, the propaganda published—as the Nazis are fond of saying—'according to plan', the entire tactical development based essentially on the principles of military science should convince the least intelligent of the spectacle that can be compared with the historical recurrence as defined by Oswald Spengler and other European thinkers.

I will not analyse the role that the international Church of Rome has assumed in the world, armed conflict where the forces of democracy and progress are pitted against the forces of Darkness, Dictat, and Reaction. It is a role assumed and assigned. It is the eternal *Machtkpolitik* (power politics) of the institutional and

organizational Papacy. I will restrict the survey in this little article to a single aspect of the totalitarian activities of the international agency of Unreason and Power.

When Europe and other countries of the world were either completely or partially rid of the oppression and obsession of the Church of Rome and men made the fatal mistake of allowing the far-flung metastatic growths of the political Church to remain uncrushed in the false assurance that the cancer-like cells were neutralized and would not lead the steady march through the minute lymphatic channels towards the developed attack, it was thought that Reason won the war and was enthroned. It was thought that human progress was a continuous process which, apart from the problem that might be presented of its activity, was adequately safeguarded against the danger of an attack from the forces that had been fought and defeated. It was a mistake and we are paying the price for it.

What is the position of the Pope of Rome vis-a-vis the values to which we adhere? I say it is both clear and obvious. Once bitten it is twice shy—and cunning. A glance at the political map of Europe and the dark doings that are proceeding behind the din of battle and the lines of soldiers give us a full insight into this position. The question is one of simple arithmetic. It is one of gains and losses and the men sent out to save our souls do not take an other-worldly view of money or material goods. Long before that economic wizard of Nazi Germany, Schacht, made his bow to an astounded international audience, men of Rome were quietly operating in distant corners of the world following the same principles that Nazi Germany was to translate on every plane. It is quite easy to believe that Adolph Hitler simply took a

leaf out of the book of the Church: he also, as we know with our knowledge of international affairs, came to an understanding with that Church and when the Bishop of Parma, Secretary General of 'Catholic Action' at Rome invites Roman Catholics to fight in defence of the gospels on the side of the Axis, no doubt is left of the position.

But where does science come in all this? you ask. You must know a few things about the background of the 'ideology' of Nazis and Fascists to understand the place that science occupies in the scheme of affairs of these criminal gentlemen. This ideology is the spearhead of attack and when the Nazis attach Max Planck and sponsor all kinds of theorists in support of the ideological background of Fascism, when they reduce science as a hand-maid to international brigandage, when they talk of art that an Austrian house-painter conceived as the New Art, the supreme and only art that the world has a right to enjoy, the Holy Father's show is given away.

We must study the literature of 'Catholic Action' as well as its Horse-of-Troy strategy. If science is the enemy he must be undermined. The military principle of surprise in attack, the military principle of camouflage, the military principle of throwing confusion in the enemy ranks are well-known. Rome is working them out. If science is a fortress that is invulnerable to frontal, bull-at-the-gate attack, if science cannot be stormed, why, you must change your tactics. Infiltrate, penetrate, weaken from inside. This operation has been brought off by the 'power units' of the army of the Third Reich. I say Rome has employed these tactics for decades since science came into her own in the civilized world.

(Please turn to page 20)

REVIEWS

The Hindu Heritage (November 1941). Editor, K. Viswanathan. Published by J. K. Shastri, 2/10 Brahmanwada Road, Bombay 19. Pp. 16, price 3 as.

This is a religious magazine exhibiting all the kinks that go with the religious mentality. The first article entitled "Woman in Hindu Scriptures" is supposed to be an answer to "The westerner (who) without clearly understanding Hindu sociology says that Hindu woman is ill-treated; she has no status", and proceeds to prove that she was accorded great honour in Vedic times. Now the westerner mentioned above is certainly not concerned with Vedic times and it is no answer to him to say, "We do not know if any other religion gives her such a high place". What is the use of that religion if it is superseded by custom as it always is? This is muddled writing if not intentional evasion.

Practically all the articles are religious and seem to me to make confusion worse confounded. The article on Faith by Swami Rajeswaran is an instance in point. He makes a distinction between faith and belief, says that one starts with belief, then goes on to reason and then acquires knowledge and faith. But why start with belief and not with unbelief? Further, the writer takes it for granted that some things are above reason. "Further reason cannot show itself more reasonable than to cease reasoning on things above reason." What right has the writer to lay down limits to reason? This is one of the usual tricks of religious writers and it enables them to make use of logic so far as convenient to them and then claim that reason cannot go further and that the rest must be understood by faith. We claim that there are no limits to reasoning. This does not mean of course that reason has solved all problems, but if there is any chance of their being solved, it is reason that will solve them and not religion.

R. D. Karve.

NOTES AND NEWS

We congratulate Dr. R. P. Paranjpye, the well-known educationist and rationalist on his receiving a knighthood in the New Year's honours list. Dr. Paranjpye is a keen member of our Association and a forthright and outspoken rationalist. He is also a prolific writer. Readers are aware that at the request of the Rationalist Press Association of London, he wrote *The Crux of the Indian Problem* in 1931, which is being sent free by the R. A. I. to new members. The Karnatak Publishing House, Bombay, published in 1940 the *Selected Writings and Speeches of Dr. R. P. Paranjpye*, Edited by B. M. Gore of the Fergusson College, Poona.

* * * *

The book contains more than 30 articles and speeches of Dr. R. P. Paranjpye on Literary, Educational, Political and Social problems. As Prof. Gore says in his foreword to the book :—

The range as well as the volume of Dr. Paranjpye's work is surprising. His collected writings will easily cover more than a thousand pages. Many of his articles are scattered through various journals and magazines, some long since defunct. Dr. Paranjpye seems to believe in not letting his left hand know what his right hand has written as many of these writings appear under various ingenious "pen-names". To a common reader, it would be a protean search to identify the pen of Dr. Paranjpye in this mass of writings hidden in the dusty files of newspapers.

In all his writings and speeches Dr. Paranjpye has always fearlessly advocated a robust, rationalist outlook on life.

* * * *

We congratulate Prof. D. K. Karve, well-known reformer and founder of the Indian Women's University and the Hindoo Widows' Home at Poona on his being awarded the Doctorate of Literature by

the Benares Hindu University. The Convocation ceremony for the presentation of this degree, we learn, will take place on 21st January. Prof. D. K. Karve is a keen rationalist and a member of our Association.

* * * * *

Prof. D. K. Karve has written his autobiography, *Looking Back*, with a preface by the late Frederick J. Gould, renowned rationalist and lecturer on Ethics. It is published by the Hindu Widows' Home Association, Hingne, Budruk, Poona, 4. (Price Re. 1-4-0). One can rightly say of Prof. Karve's life that it is stranger than fiction. His monumental work in the cause of women's education and social reform is described in his own simple language in this fascinating autobiography.

* * * * *

Mr. K. T. Chandy spoke on "Law and Society" at the Hall at Standard Building, Hornby Road, Bombay. Prof. R. D. Karve presided. The lecture was fairly well attended and was followed by questions from the audience. A very big lecture programme for this year is being arranged of which announcements will appear in local papers as well as *Reason*. We hope that as the place becomes better known we shall have larger audiences. It was also intended to arrange social functions at the same place but unfortunately refreshments are not allowed to be served in that hall.

* * * * *

The Rationalist Association of India has completed one more year of its existence, thanks to the generous help of members and friends. Once again they have assured us of their continued support. In addition to this it has been decided to make a special effort during 1942 to improve the position of the R. A. I. The R. A. I. secured nearly

40 new members during last year. We need at least 300 more members so that we can meet the expenses of the Association without having to rely on donations. And what is more important we need more young and active workers to organise activities all over India and make known the existence of the R. A. I. to thousands of men and women who are unaware of it. So let every member determine to get at least five new members during this year. It should not be very difficult with the excellent offer which is announced on the 2nd cover page of this issue. Let every rationalist determine to do his best for the cause and we shall have no fear for the future of Rationalism in India.

* * * * *

We gratefully acknowledge the following :—

J. H. Modi, Rs. 5 ; Dr. W. N. Welinker, Rs. 5 ; S. W. Willatts, Australia, Rs. 5 ; Mrs. M. F. M. Phelps, Cape Town, Rs. 5 ; "Popesco", Singapore, Rs. 5 ; "Seni", Singapore, Rs. 5 ; S. V. Kirloskar, Poona, Rs. 5 ; Aziz F. Nakhoda, Rs. 5 ; B. D. Solomon, Rs. 5.

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(Continued from page 8)

"When, as happened in England in the days of economic expansion from 1850 to 1900, the proletariat in the main becomes forced by circumstances to face the fact that the past will never come again, it settled down to make the best of it. Its struggles take the form of endeavours to drive the best possible bargain with the bourgeoisie, partly through Trade Union combinations, partly through pitting Radical politicians against Whig manufacturers and both against Tory squires....."

"It is to this period that the basic conservative traditions of the British labour movement, both on the Trade Union side and its Labour Party side may be traced." (P. 375)

"Broadly speaking, this was due to the circumstance of the strength of the Trade Unions (mostly confined to skilled workers) on the one side, and to the undisputed hegemony of the economic world enjoyed by British manufacturers on the other. So great were the gains of the British bourgeoisie from the exploitation of the world market—the exploitation of India, the supplying of railway materials and machinery to America, Australia and Europe generally—that it paid the British bourgeoisie to concede a better wage standard to the skilled workers than bed-rock economic necessity demanded and so gain a (relatively) continuous running of industry and an uninterrupted flow of profits. Cheap food, the produce of the exploitation of India, North America and Australia as well as Ireland, made things bearable for the unskilled workers, and emigration provided a safety-valve for the surplus population. The result was the appearance at the head of the British Trade

Unions and the political clubs of the workers of a group of leaders who were firm in their faith that the only role of the workers' combination was to see to it that in the cutting of the 'cake' (produced by the super-exploitation of the world market made possible by Britain's enormous economic superiority over the rest of the world) 'organised labour' should not be forgotten!" (Pp. 375-376)

The third phase in the growth of proletarian struggles is the revolutionary phase. When Capitalism as a world force ceases to progress, when economic crises and wars rock it to its very foundations, the capitalist class ceases "to be wise enough to compromise". One who has watched the tremendous leftward swing of the proletarian movement in all countries since the First World War, will easily recognise what is taking place. Even in England, the growth of a left wing inside the Labour Party, led by people like Stafford Cripps, D. N. Pritt and others; the general strike of 1926; the growth of the Communist Party itself and the revolutionary sentiment among the workers, especially in the mining and metallurgical industries, the growing sense of solidarity with the anti-imperialist movements of colonial peoples, are all indications of the growing revolutionary consciousness. The position of the British bourgeoisie no longer enables it to make concessions as before to workers. Witness the fall of the last Labour Government, the washing away of all the social legislation enacted by that Government, and the continued lowering of the standards of the British working class. But to Mr. Karve concrete historical facts are of no importance in making assertions.

(to be concluded.)

(Continued from page 14)

same time has chosen to parade his own condemnation of Ramachandra for his treatment of his ideal wife, Sita. On his own showing, therefore, Mr. Pandya has been too good a man to practise what he now so blatantly preaches!

Though RAMA-RAJYA is a plea against 'Rama-rajya' (in its worst aspects), the book appears to have been so named, somewhat ironically, as though on the principle of '*Lucus a non lucendo*'. It only reminds one of William Digby's famous work entitled '*Prosperous British India*'.

That the author of RAMA-RAJYA is not a mere rationalist should have been clear to the reviewer, even if he had cared to read the introduction contributed to the book by Prof. R. D. Karve. Mr. Nadkarni is a religionist and has composed his work from the truly religious standpoint. Even Mr. Pandya who affects to have such a soft corner in his heart for the 'susceptibilities' of obscurantists styling themselves 'orthodox' will be hard put to it to rebut Mr. Nadkarni's argument that the Sudra lynched by King Rama could be shown to have transgressed no Sastraic injunction; for there are none, according to Mr. Nadkarni, against a Sudra practising *tapas* (austerity); and the well-known story of Dhruva as an uninitiated boy (and hence a Sudra) practising *tapas* to propitiate Vishnu and eventually attaining beatitude is a case in point.

One can only wish that Mr. Pandya, instead of halting between the cause of rational reform, espoused in the spirit of his own Shraddhand and Ashram address, on the one hand, and the blind belief in tradition, miscalled 'orthodoxy', motivated by a craven fear of wounding unworthy 'susceptibilities', on the other—would definitely range himself on the former side and leave for good his present 'lop-sided' policy of crying 'Pull devil, pull baker'; or such a policy will carry him nowhere.

(Continued on next page)

Hindu.

(Continued from page 18)

What role did 'Catholic Action' play in Republican Spain? There is only one 'Catholic Action' as there is only one Church. Is it not a fact that men who spit venom at the masonic orders imitate the organizational character of these orders? Opportunism is the essence of effective action—the principle of Rome is that there are no fixed principles of action. There is only the central plan, the grand strategy and tactics must be switched to the necessity of the moment.

That is exactly why 'Catholic Action' has placed its men and women everywhere—in our administration, in our Universities, and after the 'specialists in education and law' were discredited and exposed in every civilized country in Europe, they have continued to try to dominate all organizations connected with the service of thought or science. It's the enemy within the gates. How many pseudo-scientific organizations are now established in this city? There is the S. Luke's Medical Academy the members of which are padres without any medical or scientific training but who pose as biologists and pretend to discuss—can you guess?—consanguinity of marriages amongst the Jews. The man who mumbles the abracadabra of Roman soul-saving poses to be a Mendel. And yet these padres are allowed to rub shoulders with genuine medically-trained men. This is an instance of the demoralization that has been brought about amongst the followers of science themselves. No wonder the Pope should take science under his cloak and announce the fact triumphantly to a shocked world. Where is our scientific integrity?

Beware of the man
whose god is in the heaven.

—Bernard Shaw.

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CONTENTS.

Dew Drops by Abraham Solomon	21
The Devil is Dead	22
Arts and Obscenity by R. D. Karve	23
Religion in Russia by C. L. D'Aveine	25
The Crisis of the Intellectuals by Ashokankur Sen	27
Superstitious Films by Narayan S. Bapat	29
Review	30
Karve's Opium by Critique	31
Notes and News	34

DEW DROPS

The war is becoming grimmer every day, and has already touched Indian soil. It may not be long before we, here, may have to actually experience what we have been hearing and reading about. As had been anticipated by many writers before the war, this war with its mass destruction, death and the misery it entails is proving to be such as has never been witnessed in human history. At such a time of crisis the atmosphere in India is not very encouraging. It is one of uncertainty and helplessness. The uneducated masses are unable to analyse or understand the complex forces that are in conflict. Neither are they able to see any difference between one political system and another. This is because few political leaders have ever tried to educate their followers. All they have been concerned with is to retain their power and position by exploiting the emotional and religious prejudices of the people. It is the person who talks long enough and loud enough who holds sway.

* * * *

Such an atmosphere has never been conducive to progress, or the rational solution of any problem. Rational action has always been the outcome of clear thinking, and any thing that hinders it is an obstacle to progress. This is no time

for complacency and inaction. At this moment of crisis it is the duty of all thinking men and women to throw overboard all differences of caste and creed, to strive for the unity of the Indian people, to educate them and make them conscious of the fundamental liberties that must be preserved and fought for, if India is to emerge from this world conflict a free and prosperous nation.

* * * *

Writing in the June 1941 number of the American illustrated magazine *Life*, Charles J. V. Murphy and David E. Scherman tell how the ship "Zamzam" was sunk in the South Atlantic ocean by a German raider. The Zamzam sailed from New York bound for Alexandria and on the way put in at Baltimore for additional cargo and passengers. The Captain, William Gray Smith, say the writers of the story, looked down unhappily on the pier where 120 missionaries sang "Lead kindly light" and two dozen cheerful irreverent ambulance drivers tried to drown them out with an impudent song of their own. Smith a bouncy little Scot with a weather reddened face turned to the Chief Engineer, "Mark my words, Chief" he said grimly, "it is bad luck for a ship to have so many Bible punchers and sky pilots aboard. No good will come out of this!" Well the Zamzam was certainly not well protected by these agents of Heaven. She went down soon after meeting the raider. The Zamzam which was an Egyptian ship bore a holy name, for Zamzam is the name of a holy well at Mecca.

* * * *

Miss Eve Curie, daughter of the famous Madame Curie, is in India. Some months back the Vichy Government declared Miss Eve Curie "unworthy of French citizenship". A pity Sir! a pity—for France.

THE DEVIL IS DEAD

Sigh priests, cry aloud, hang your pulpits with black;
Let sorrow bow down every head,
The good friend who bore all your sins on his back—
Your best friend, the Devil, is dead!

Your Church is a corpse, you are guarding its tomb,
The soul of your system has fled.
The death-knell is tolling your terrible doom;
It tells us the Devil is dead.

'Twas knowledge gave Satan a terrible blow;
Poor fellow! He took to his bed.
Alas! Idle priests, that such things should be so—
Your master, the Devil is dead.

You're bid to the funeral, ministers all;
We've dug the old gentleman's bed;
Your black coats will make a most excellent pall,
To cover your friend who is dead.

Aye! Lower him mournfully into the grave,
Let showers of teardrops be shed;
Your business is gone; there are no souls to save—
Their tempter, the Devil, is dead.

Woe comes upon woe: you can ne'er get your dues—
Hell's open—the damned souls have fled;
They took to their heels when they heard the good news;
Their jailer, the Devil, is dead.

Your preachings henceforth will be needed no more;
Revivals are knocked on the head;
The orthodox vessel lies stranded on shore;
Her captain, the Devil, is dead.

W. DENTON, "Radical Rhymes."
(From "The Freethinker," London.)

On the title page of a recent book by Bertrand Russell, *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth* published by George Allen and Unwin Ltd., are given all the literary and academic qualifications of Bertrand Russell and the different Colleges and Universities all over the world where he has been professor. It makes quite a big paragraph of close print, at the end of which we find the following "Judicially pronounced unworthy to be Professor of Philosophy at the College of the City of New York, 1940."

ART AND OBSCENITY

By **R. D. KARVE**

BEING present at the First Art Conference held in Bombay on the 24th & 25th of January, I was surprised to find that even artists cannot get rid of the idea of obscenity. Innocent of all rules of procedure, the President, Mr. Ravishankar Raval of Ahmedabad, put from the Chair, I believe on his own initiative, a resolution to the effect that commercial artists should be requested not to make use of the female figure in a manner insulting to the "fair sex". I was extremely glad to find, however, that the artists assembled there were not so tame as the president expected them to be. There were a number of protests, but hardly any to the point. Perhaps it is wrong to expect logic from artists, who depend much more on feeling than on reasoning. Some of them said that they were obliged to use the female figure, even in the nude, at the request of their patrons who had to sell their goods. Some did point out that it was difficult to understand the meaning of the resolution. The president explained that he had no objection to the nude as such, but that the nude figure should be "decent".

I wonder if the president himself had any exact idea of what he meant. I for one cannot see how even a nude figure can be insulting to anybody, unless the picture claims to represent a given individual. Considering also that there are women artists and that some of these were present in that hall, it is difficult to see why the resolution was about the fair sex only. Ultimately the president had to give up the idea of putting it from the chair and got

a delegate to put it and another to second it. After some controversy, it was passed by a majority.

That resolution was a disgrace to a meeting of artists. One of them explained that the resolution only meant that artists should behave in a gentlemanly way, so that there was nothing wrong in it. This assumes that artists do not usually behave in a gentlemanly way and that a resolution of this kind was necessary. It was an insult to the artists assembled, and yet the protests were not to my mind strong enough. It is worthy of note that not one of those who spoke in favour of the resolution could give an instance of how a picture could insult the fair sex. They had a vague idea that certain pictures were obscene and they apparently thought that such pictures were usually exhibited in advertisements, in spite of the laws that exist in every country against obscenity.

I maintain that an artist who has not got rid of the idea of obscenity does not deserve to be called a real artist. He may have learnt, even to perfection, the grammar of art which, as one of them remarked in another connection, is taught at Art Schools, but he has certainly not learnt to appreciate the beauty of the human body. Some of them sneered at "sex appeal", which did not deserve to be encouraged! When such an artist says that he does not object to nude pictures as such, he is merely bowing to artistic tradition which has always allowed nude pictures and he knows that the best artists have painted them. But he surely does

not know that the very idea of beauty is based on "sex appeal". As a great French author has remarked, "to the male toad, the ideal of beauty is the female toad". When cornered, such an artist will tell you that he does not object to the nude, but that the nude should be artistic. But who has ever defined the word 'artistic'? It is merely a subterfuge.

This incubus of obscenity is not of recent origin. In fact one artist in favour of the resolution had the cheek to refer to ancient Indian tradition in support. What surprised me was that this reference did not raise a roar of laughter, considering that the pictures on some ancient temples frankly represent copulation, natural and unnatural, and that many artists have photographed these pictures, which escape the law simply because the law makes an exception in favour of religious pictures. Indian tradition has nothing to do with it. It is very well known that there is in India a religious sect called "Digambar Jains" (Digambar means "whose raiment is the sky") who are supposed to wear nothing at all at any time. Only a few years back, the Sadhus of this sect staged one of their periodical processions at Nasik. The Government was in a fix, because it is not supposed to meddle with religion and still did not like to allow such a thing. They tried to find a *via media* by giving permission to have the procession in the early morning, before there was light enough for anybody to see it. But they counted without the people, who provided Kitson lights all along the route, so that the whole procession was brilliantly lighted and was thus even more conspicuous than it would have been in the daytime. Perhaps the only advantage was that children too young to get up early were saved that view.

But this procession of hundreds of naked men was witnessed at close quarters by all the men and women who could possibly get there. Even religion does some good sometimes and this sect is a standing protest against the stupid idea that nudity is obscene. I must add that the origin of this sect was not at all due to any idea of protesting against the notion of obscenity. That was an accident, but nobody can say that Indian tradition favours decency, if that word has any meaning.

I think the artist's concern should be beauty rather than decency. In fact I fail to understand how beauty can be indecent. No doubt artists have even in ancient times been obliged to observe certain restrictions imposed on them by a hypocritical society, but it is certainly not the business of the artist to advocate these restrictions. The utmost that can be expected of the artist is to submit to these restrictions *under protest*. But here we had a set of artists assembled in conference, who were asked by the Chair to impose restrictions of decency on themselves. The main idea of the resolution was that nudity is obscene unless it is camouflaged in a certain way. What else can it mean? Since the days of ancient Greece and Rome, artists have had to obey certain conventions. For instance, artists were not supposed to represent the *membrum virile* in its normal proportions (it is the fear of magistrates that drives me into Latin). Has any artist the presumption to say that the human body is normally ugly and that he has to modify it or clothe it to make it beautiful?

In this connection, I may mention a discussion between two French artists,

(Please turn to page 35)

RELIGION IN RUSSIA

By C. L. D'AVOINE

NO country in the world has been slandered as was Russia ever since she adopted a communistic form of Government and abolished Christianity as a State religion. England and America, in particular, invented all the lies they could against that country, heaped abuses and insults against her and represented her as a land where all principles were abolished and where misery and insecurity of life prevailed. For more than fifteen years they encouraged their press and pulpit to slander and misrepresent Russia, to create all sorts of prejudice against her and to make believe that such a country without religion was a Hell on earth. It is, no doubt, true that the reason of this detestable attitude towards Russia was really due to her communistic form of Government. The privileged classes in England, America and France simply abhorred the very idea of communism. Communism, it must be admitted, does not appeal to many people. Personally, I myself, do not like it, but surely Russia had every right to adopt that form of Government if her people liked it. The simple denunciation of Russia on a political issue might not have been so successful as her political opponents wanted, therefore they clearly sought the help of Religion to create the greatest suspicion and distrust against that country and to raise as much prejudice against her as they possibly could. Hence it is, that the heads of religion in England, France, Germany, Italy and America did all in their power to blacken that country and represent her people as demoralized, degraded and a vicious lot. In England, the aged Archbishop of Canterbury and

Cardinal Hinsley never allowed a day to pass without slandering and abusing Russia. They were ably assisted by a dishonest press and years of vilification did their worst to undermine the friendly relations which might have existed with that country. It is known that as late as the Munich Conference with Hitler, English politicians would have nothing to do with Russia.

Yet, it can be safely said that in spite of all these provocations, Russia remained calm and unruffled, and occupied herself with her own business and never for a moment rattled the sword or showed the mailed fist against any nation.

I am one of those who firmly believe that a good deal of our present trouble and predicament is due to the unreasonable and hostile attitude England, France and America showed towards Russia. Instead of being alive to the danger Germany was creating with her feverish preparation for war, the countries named above showed the greatest unconcern and were solely preoccupied with the "evil designs" of Russia, which they said was determined to spread her pernicious and godless doctrines all over the world. We have it on the authority of a Leading English Daily of Calcutta, in an editorial article in May 1940, that England actually lent Hitler 60 million pounds to arm and fight Russia! It is well known that Franc, the Rebel of Spain, "the Champion of Catholicism," had the sympathy of England and France when he declared war against the Republicans of Spain. The Spanish Republicans were believed to be the emissaries of Moscow and that was enough for aristocratic England. Small

wonder that when war actually broke out England and France were absolutely unprepared and Hitler, therefore, had no difficulty in smashing France in a few weeks, and England would have suffered the same fate had not the sea separated her from the continent.

It is evident that Hitler, himself, was misled by the antagonistic attitude of England and America towards Russia. He believed that he had only to declare war against Russia to change the attitude of England and America towards Germany. But he made a sad mistake. Instead of finding Russia a disorganised and demoralized country through which he could walk as he liked, he found a most determined and trained people ready to oppose him to the bitter end.

Sir V. Raman, the great Indian scientist, says that the secret of Russia's success against Germany is due to science, and I am sure most right-thinking people will agree with this. Ever since Russia abolished the Christian religion and encouraged a scientific education, her people have been transformed and regenerated. To-day the Russians are no longer the dull, superstitious and stupid peasants they were under the Czar and the Russian Church, they have become men and women guided by reason and intelligence. These are the men and women who are out to smash Hitler. These "atheists" are out to save the world from slavery and degradation. The "Godites" as the *Free-thinker* of England calls the slanderers of Russia are simply dumbfounded. Their God is actually helping Russia while He ignores them in spite of their frequent national prayers and piety.

It is true that the politicians in England, headed by Mr. Winston Churchill, have behaved most honourably and sensibly the

moment Russia was attacked by Germany. They declared that Russia was the ally of England and that England was determined to do her utmost to give whatever help she could to Russia. Most of the slanderers of Russia had to keep quiet, though a few here and there, especially in America, did not appear well pleased to see Christian England and America the allies of godless Russia. Some Catholics even went so far as to say that it would be better to lose the war than to become the allies of Russia. This shows the wicked and pernicious influence of religion in world affairs, a fact which any sensible nation after this war would do well to remember.

Had Russia any sound reasons for abolishing Christianity as a State religion? Those who knew Russia well before the Revolution say she had.

About twelve years ago a number of well-known English men and women visited Russia. Among them were such well known persons as Prof. J. Huxley, H. G. Wells and Bernard Shaw. Some clergymen also were among that group. On their return to England they spoke highly of the educational reform of Russia and the great good it had already accomplished. Quite recently Mr. H. N. Brailsford writing in *The New Statesman and Nation* says: "Of all the Christian faiths the Eastern Church as it existed in Russia was the most obscurantist and the most tightly bound in the old despotism and obsolete social structure." Speaking of the so-called religious persecution in Russia he says: "Inevitably bishops and priests suffered with their lay patrons in the bloody Civil War. But even when armed resistance was crushed, the priest was often in every village the rallying point of the inert conservative opposition of the elder generation of illiterate

(Please turn to page 36)

THE CRISIS OF THE INTELLECTUALS

By **ASHOKANKUR SEN**

THE tragedy of the present world of culture is its divided mentality, its Hamlet-like wavering on the cross-ing of two ways, its half-hearted acceptance of the values and ideas suited to a new order without completely giving up the prejudices that mark the present reactionary and decadent phase of civilization. The best type of the intellectuals of the day are splendid visionaries enthralled by the prospect of a brighter day on the earth, but appalled by the magnitude of the darkness that deepens as the dawn comes nearer. They are gifted people, who sing the glory of democracy, liberty, equality—the paradisaical loveliness of a new social order fundamentally just and rational, in which alone the individual will be able to realize his best self. But, except through the elastic mysticism of winged words that cannot soar beyond the darkening horizon of their immediate vision, they do not know how to assist in the quelling of the passions that threaten to destroy the very basis of civilization. Their vision of the coming order is not coherent and clear; their calculation of the necessarily limited power of the reactionary forces is mistaken on account of wrong reading of the lessons of past history. The ideas that move about in the atmosphere of the dying order are not completely purged off their minds. Therefore, they are prone to falter in their faith in the inevitability of a finished order of society, and are unable to strengthen, or take sides with, the causes whose triumph alone will lead to that end.

We are not referring to the intellectuals like Noguchi, parasites and products of the

old order, who still dream of the possibility of reviving the nationalistic chapter of human history, of recapturing the glories of capitalistic democracy while yet it was in the first phase of imperial expansion. The boast of establishing a new order of democracy and democratic culture in the old style all the world over under the protecting wings of the empire-builders, was then successfully made and believed in; but with the stir of life in the lower classes of society that came in consequence, it was found that they cannot be accommodated in the scheme of things, and the real intentions of the revivalists become apparent in all their nakedness beyond the velvet glove of genteel pretensions. Fascism is more clear and consistent in its aims and pretensions than capitalistic democracy. It is the last organized self-assertion of the capitalistic order before its inevitable collapse and even lacks the saving graces, the signs of prosperity and progress that marked capitalism in its earlier days of glory.

But the class of intellectuals, of whom we write, welcome quite frankly the prospect of a better social system. They are opponents of fascism and lovers of that liberty without which culture can hardly breathe. They very rightly fear that the triumph of fascism will plunge the world back into the gloom of barbarism for a parallel of which we must go back to the Middle Ages or to the decadent phase that dominated the last days of the Roman Empire. Some of the best among them laid down their lives in the apparently lost cause of Democratic Spain, and some are exiled, far from their fatherland, for their boldness and originality of thought, for refusing to think along

the lines of racial and nationalistic complex, and other elements of an inferior culture which the urge of self-expansion has made fascism extol, even at point of sword, into the philosophy of life for a nation. There are other intellectuals whose minds are still rooted in the habits of the past, who either think subconsciously at least, in terms of capitalistic democracy or else consider fascism as the final force of destruction too formidable for our civilization to be able to endure. They are unable to look beyond the skilfully organized forces of reaction for a faint gleam of the forces of that new order whose gathering strength alone will proclaim the advent of the dawn. The triumph of reaction in Spain, the break-down of the Popular Front in the West—due undoubtedly to a combination of incompatibles—are causes of rude shock. The stubborn resistance of China to the Japanese aggression may not lead to the victory of democracy in that front; and the prospects of the present war in Europe are none too sure. It appears as though it is democracy and not fascism, far less capitalistic democracy, which is being pushed to the wall for the last desperate fight in the ditch.

The intellectuals are handicapped to a great extent by a prejudice derived from past ways of thinking. Asceticism was a feature of the ancient and medieval philosophies. An aloofness from the crooked ways of the world, a life all of detached observation and contemplation, was necessary for the clear perception of truth, but too much of it, or a continued practice of it, was fatal; for, it left the world at the mercy of reactionary forces, of vested interests who fashioned their culture to the necessity of their instincts of self-preservation and self-aggrandizement.

Compromise with the vested interests was also a feature of the ancient and medieval systems of thought. That has been necessary for those measures of relief, that driving impetus which the patrons supplied and without which progress could not be made then. Even so extremes of these two habits made progress of culture and civilization defective. The awakening of consciousness throughout the entire arena of social life, specially in the lower strata, requires a new outlook on the part of the intellectuals, a closer interest and participation in the struggle of forces in the world. Unfortunately prejudices die hard, and habits of asceticism and bondage to the traditional order cannot be so easily given up. So it is that much of the admiration, on the part of the artists and intellectuals, of the better and brighter features of life in the existing order, is based on false values, and mingled with bitter despair at the glaring want of some other redeeming features. The virtues of patronage, the omnipotence of the State, the blessing of patriotism and the glories of nationalism, are amongst such illusions, and a mind that tries to think in terms of these is bound to be disappointed at the imperfection of a social order based on these values.

We must therefore have a clearer vision of the future. This war is, undoubtedly, a struggle for the inevitable triumph of democracy all the world over. The sweeping expansion of fascism throughout the world, the intensity of sufferings that have overtaken the civil population, the battle of philosophies and forces, the uncertainty and gloom and travail, all point to that end. The longer the crises continue, the greater and surer will be the birth of the new consciousness. It is not

SUPERSTITIOUS FILMS

By **NARAYAN S. BAPAT**

THERE are ways and ways of exploiting people. One of them is to loot people with their own consent. That way is adopted when producers release superstitious films. We rationalists condemn all religious churches which make a very profitable capital out of the ignorance and superstitions of the masses. The producers and directors who know that a sure way of making good profits is to show superstitious films to the masses and who therefore do that, form only an extension of the church. This extended church is more dangerous than the ordinary church because it has got a very advanced scientific technique at its disposal. Besides, the doctrine of this church, though indirect, is wedded to amusement. Science gives efficacy and amusement gives surgar-coating to the harmful filmy superstitious stories.

I do not mean to say that every producer or director who knows the prosperous prospects of superstitious films and therefore produces them is deliberately spreading superstitions. Nor does every priest cause social damage with intention. But after all their actions are harmful. The producers of superstitious films do more damage to society than the little good they do in form of entertainment. The net result of superstitious films is thus anti-social. It is a sad fact to see that a strong weapon like the films is employed for the profits of a few greedy persons, at the cost of social interests.

It is true that superstitious films do not manufacture new myths or new superstitions. But using superstitious stories which are already existent or making use

of irrational conventions and omens they concrete or cement those myths, superstitions and omens in minds of men. It is a commonplace conclusion among the people who study human behaviour that if a certain false belief is repeatedly hammered before an average man he becomes more and more firm in his belief. Even comparatively civilized people in nations like Italy and Germany have fallen victims to this trick systematically employed by the Fascists. Therefore it is needless to prove how the utterly superstitious and horribly ignorant people of India are easily affected adversely by the presentation of superstitious films in theatres.

In India scientific pictures or educational pictures are a rarity—nay—as yet even an impossibility. It is utopian as yet to expect in India a good number of idealist producers and directors producing scientific or educational pictures and sacrificing a portion of their profits for them. On the contrary they are doing a positive damage by editing superstitious films so often. Superstitious films cover a considerable percentage in the total number of pictures produced. We find an abortive ugly plethora of superstitious films shown and advertised everywhere. They obstruct the progress of the people. They become one of the causes which keep people where they are intellectually. They show so many devotees and so many gods to people that they add to the difficulties in making people thoroughly rational. People have no capacity to isolate the art of the actors and the skill of the directors from the story itself. That is why social pictures of high standard sometimes fail and superstitious pictures of even a low standard not seldom pay.

REVIEW

Slave of Ideals and other plays by A. S. P. Ayyar, M.A., I.C.S., (2nd edition) C. Coomaraswamy Naidu and Sons 27, Chinnatambi St., Madras, Pp. 186, price Re. 1-8.

This book consists of four plays. The first two depict tragedies arising out of the clash of modern ideas with ancient traditions. The third is based on the well-known story of Panna, the nurse who sacrificed her own child to save the life of a prince. The fourth shows the horrible consequences of the traditional beliefs in devils and the sacrifices they are supposed to require. The plays make interesting reading, but are hardly suitable for the stage.

R. D. Karve.

Superstitious pictures are the most refined form of religious opium. It is a pitiable sight to see when people clap and shout boisterously on the arrival of God—that ubiquitous enemy of mankind—on the screen. The ways of presenting God convince the rationalists that the evil of God is man-made. But none of it to the masses. They unconsciously become more firm in their belief in God. The superstitious films have far-reaching harmful repercussions. The masses learn to depend more or solely on God rather than on themselves. They continue to think that ultimately God will come to rescue them from exploitation and injustice. Thus superstitious pictures are dangerous sedatives from the rational point of view. We rationalists must not forgive the objective quacks and swindlers who produce or praise the superstitious films. We must agitate against them and boldly expose how companies big and small alike, are criminals when they produce anti-social and intellectually poisonous superstitious pictures.

NEED FOR AN ASHRAM FOR THE AGED

There is in India as elsewhere a great need for some Ashrams for the proper care of such aged persons who, in their rainy days, have been left in the lurch, or who have been forsaken and deserted by some of their own relatives—the relatives now callously turning their backs against their former benefactors.

This kind of Ashram may be well started on a hygienic system of dietary. Such an Ashram will not extend any shelter to professional beggars, idlers, or to any addicts; but it will serve as a spiritual home for the worthy members of the community who throughout their earlier years have endeavoured to support themselves and their families by honest and hard labour, and who are now the only survivors of their once large families. The persons seeking entrance into such an Ashram should be free from all intoxicating drinks and drugs, and should have means to pay for their expenses in the Ashram—the Ashram to offer in return daily food, shelter, spiritual fellowship, medical service, ethical literature and opportunities for a wider understanding of man's kinship with all mankind.

In connection with the Ashram there would be a common fund (if practicable), in which the savings of the inmates could be safely entrusted to the Ashram management. The interest or a certain portion of the trust money would be used towards the monthly expenses of the inmate depositor. At the death of the depositor, the remaining sum (if any) would be utilised in the expansion of the Ashram, rather than fall into the hands of any undeserving relatives of the deceased inmate.

Our country people have given largely of their money, and are still giving, for many kinds of charity; but no such provision as suggested above seems to be made for the gentle aged persons who in their advanced age are badly in need of some moral support from a good Samaritan. The writer has therefore ventured to place this great need before the patriotic public in hopes that the undertaking of such a worthwhile project may result.

A Sympathiser.

KARVE'S OPIUM

By CRITIQUE

(Continued page 19)

Mr. Karve declares that the Russian Revolution was a direct contradiction of Marx's thesis. Here is a little quotation from an introduction which Marx wrote in 1882 for a Russian translation of the *Communist Manifesto*. "Let us now turn to Russia. At the time of the revolutionary wave in 1848-49, the European bourgeoisie no less than the monarchs looked upon Russian intervention as their only salvation from the proletariat, which was for the first time becoming aware of its own strength. The Tsar was acclaimed as the leader of reaction. Today he sits in his palace at Gatchina, a prisoner of war of the Revolution, and *Russia forms the vanguard of the revolutionary movement in Europe*....."

"There is one possible answer to this question. If the Russian revolution sounds the signal for a workers' revolution in the West, so that each becomes the complement of the other, then the prevailing form of communal ownership of land in Russia may serve as the starting point of a communist development." This statement gives the lie direct to Mr. Karve and others who say that Marx did not expect revolution to come about in Russia.

Mr. Karve is certainly in the elegant company of "gentlemen critics" like Raymond Postgate, Middleton Murry and Prof. MacMurray when he asserts that according to Marx's theory revolution in Russia could come only after revolution in other countries. There are many assumptions in this statement, all of which are false and anti-Marxian.

The first assumption is implied in the misinterpretation given to the dictum of Marx that "no social formation ever disappears before all the productive forces are developed for which it has room." This is that, according to Marx, each country separately and in isolation goes through a mystical process called "economic development" which though parallel in each country moves in each case at different rates. Marx said the contrary. He looked upon capitalism as a world force, its development in each country affecting its development in every other country, the whole fabric being knit together by a thousand ties of transport, interlocked financing, production and the unity of the world market. As far back as 1847 Marx and Engels wrote: "The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe. It must settle everywhere, nestle everywhere, establish connections everywhere."

"The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country.....In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency we have intercourse in every direction, *universal inter-dependence of nations*."

"And as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations became common property. National one-sidedness and national narrow-mindedness became more and more impossible and from the numerous national

and local literatures there arises a world literature"—(*Communist Manifesto*).

This universal inter-dependence is now a truism. Yet there are people who look upon capitalism as developing in isolation within the arbitrary boundaries of a State. Today world-capitalism is in decay because on an international scale it has ceased to expand the productive capacity of the world. We are witnessing the burning of coffee, reduction of acreage of wheat cultivation, artificial scarcity in order to raise profits, colossal unemployment, and above all a disastrous search for solution of this problem through a forcible re-division of the existing world market than through expansion over undeveloped areas or undeveloped needs. It is in this epoch of the decay of world-capitalism that the Russian revolution occurred. The chain broke in its weakest link and Marx expected such a possibility to materialize in fact.

"The 'Russian' Revolution of November 1917 can, in fact, only be comprehended theoretically (and its lessons used practically) if it be envisaged as only relatively 'Russian.' Only as a detail in the general world-wide revolt of the proletariat—which is world-wide because its impelling cause, the capitalist mode of production, is likewise as world-wide as is that which it has created—the world-market—only so can the November Revolution in Russia be understood. On a world front proletariat and bourgeoisie are locked in a struggle which steadily intensifies in its essential force, but finds an infinite variety of phenomenal forms of expression according as the incidentals of local and national circumstances vary likewise. That which was victorious in Russia in November, 1917, was neither a local nor a national force—but the revolutionary force of the world proletariat, which broke through bourgeois

defences just exactly at that point because in that sector the defences of the world-bourgeoisie were weakest." (Jackson—*Dialectics* Page 397).

Another assumption implied in Mr. Karve's assertion is that according to Marx, because Russia was industrially backward, she could not have a strong socialist movement capable of capturing power. This again raises the questions, whether Russia was absolutely backward or only relatively backward in regard to the development of capitalism, whether the proletarian movement, like its progenitor world-capitalism, is a world movement in which the component national groups exchange ideas and experiences and help each other in their collective advance, or whether it is a movement developing in isolation in each country mechanically corresponding to the extent of industrialisation in that country, and whether the militancy of the working class depends upon their number. On all these questions Marx held views directly contrary to what critics of Marx allege to be his.

Even in the days of Marx capitalism was developing in Russia, a process which has been much accentuated since then. A proletariat was emerging in Russia as a distinct economic class and also as a political force. It is true that the shifting of the world economic centre of gravity from the Eastern Mediterranean to the Atlantic Sea board retarded the growth of capitalism in Russia, but by no means stopped the development. In fact a considerable amount of foreign, especially British and French, capital went into Russia and developed Russian industries. Those who are interested in a study of the development of capitalism in Russia may be referred to Lenin's classic work *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, or

to the extensive extracts from that work available in book I of Lenin's selected works.

Secondly, Marx had always insisted upon the proletarian movement growing up as an international movement just as its progenitor capitalism is also such a movement. Marx campaigned against any mechanical equation between the number of the proletariat and their militancy. He had always said that ideology is not merely conditioned by the basic economic structure, but itself in turn impels people to change the structure. The working class of a country gaining from the experience of other countries, in their turn modify their attitude and struggle so as to incorporate that experience. The outlook of the working class or of the capitalist class in a country is not the automatic result of the economic development of that country, but it is the fruit of the economic development of the whole world and the collective experience of that class all over the world.

Thirdly, Marx definitely visualised an alliance between the revolutionary working class and the revolutionary peasantry. The working class attempts to carry through the social revolution against capitalism not by waging a struggle isolated from the struggle of the other exploited classes, but by leading the other classes.

Adoratsky in his article "Leninism" summarises the facts and the views of Marx on this question as follows. Selected works, page 119: "Of all the European parties, the Russian Bolshevik Party alone had made serious preparation for this struggle, owing to the fact that in Russia a revolutionary situation had been developing since the middle of the 19th century. The Russian revolutionary movement was the most powerful in Europe.....

"Marx and Engels had pointed out in their time the approach of the revolution in Russia, the extremely rapid development of capitalism in that vast country and the unbearable yoke of tsarism.

"They had understood (1) the complexity of the social structure in Russia, the existence of the most primitive, together with the most modern forms ('every stage of social development is represented from the primitive commune to modern large scale industry and high finance' as Engels wrote to V. J. Zasulich in 1885); (2) they took into account the existence of a revolutionary situation; they saw that revolution required only a jolt to bring vast masses of people into action; (3) they foresaw that the revolutionary explosion would be of tremendous power and that it would inevitably assume a most violent and bitter character ('Russia is heading towards a most violent revolution' Marx wrote to Engels in 1870); (4) they foresaw that in this last of the great European countries to pass through the capitalist industrial revolution, the conflict would assume unprecedented dimensions ('This time the crash will beat anything known before; all the factors are there; intensity, universal extension, entanglement of all ruling and possessing social elements.' So Engels wrote to Marx on April 14, 1856); (5) they realized the tremendous significance of the Russian revolution for the world revolution. That the latter would be a socialist revolution Marx and Engels never doubted (cf. Marx's letters to Engels, Nov. 13, 1859, Feb. 13, 1863, Sept. 27, 1877, etc.)."

Probably Mr. Karve read the works of the Englishman H. M. Ayndman, and the American Daniel Leon, and took their views to be those of Marx. It would have been better to read Marx himself.

NOTES AND NEWS

We would like to hear from members who will act as Representatives of the R. A. I. in different parts of India and undertake the formation of local groups. They will be instructed as to the lines on which they will have to work. Dr. Prem Nath is doing excellent work in his area and we hope all our members in Panipat and places round about will co-operate with him in his efforts for the best of causes.

* * * *

We once again draw the attention of our readers to the offer of literature to new members enrolling before 31st March. We hope our members will also do their best to get us new members. The best way to help the R. A. I. is to increase its membership.

* * * *

A copy of the pamphlet *The Truth* by Ingersoll is being sent free to all the members of the R. A. I. Several members have bought extra copies for distribution. It is an excellent propaganda pamphlet and we hope more will do the same.

* * * *

The Annual General Meeting and Dinner of the R. A. I. will be held on Sunday, 15th March 1942. Members are requested to make a note of the date and make it a point to attend.

* * * *

We are pleased to note the generous support we are receiving from our members in spite of the disturbing times. We gratefully acknowledge the following :—

Dr. R. K. Jhaveri, Delhi, Rs. 5 ; R. D. Karve, Rs. 5 ; Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, Rs. 5 ; Dr. Claude D'Avoine, Rs. 5 ; Ivon D'Avoine, Rs. 5 ; Eugene D'Avoine, Rs. 5 ; Prof. D. K. Karve, Poona, Rs. 5 ; Prof. S. K. Muranjan, Dharwar, Rs. 5 ; R. R. Shrestha, Rs. 5 ; J. B. H. Wadia, Rs. 5 ; V. V. Sohoni, Poona, Rs. 5 ; Sir Raghunath P. Paranjpye, Poona, Rs. 5 ; Dr. S. R. Joglekar, Rs. 5.

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Chandulal, Panipat, Rs. 5 ; " T. R. C. " Trichinopoly, Rs. 5 ; B. P. Paradkar, Rs. 5 ; P. Madan Mohan Lal, Panipat, Rs. 5 ; Rajender Singh, Panipat, Rs. 5 ; Zahid Omar, Panipat, Rs. 5 ; Dr. R. D. Muzumdar,

Karwar, Rs. 5 ; Miss A. M. V. Webbe, Meerut, Rs. 5 ; Alimya Rahimtoola, Rs. 5 ; " B. M. B.," Bassein, Rs. 5.

Donations to Reserved Fund :—

Prof. D. K. Karve, Poona, Rs. 5 ; J. B. H. Wadia, Rs. 10.

Donations to General Fund :—

Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, Rs. 10 ; B. P. Paradkar, Rs. 5 ; Prof. S. K. Muranjan, Dharwar, Rs. 25 ; J. B. H. Wadia, Rs. 10.

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PERSONAL

A Rationalist wishes to meet other rationalists in Delhi and correspond with others. Write C/o Asstt. Ed., *Reason*.

As for Mr. Karve's contemptuous sneer, that Stalin is a dictator and there is tyranny against the majority in Russia, one has only to ask whether there is any country other than Russia, where the people have shown such heroism, such initiative, such capacity for building up the greatest engineering works and such capacity for sacrificing these achievements for waging a people's war. Such unity, organisation, heroism and initiative are not the products of tyranny, but of freedom of the toiling classes. In Russia they have little patience for those who climb ivory towers and spend time in idle criticism.

(I shall not attempt the impossible task of convincing " Critique," but I can assure him that I have not read the English authors that he names. My article was based on Max Eastman's " Marxism, Is It Science ? " where he will find chapter and verse quoted for all the statements which form the basis of my article. I still assert on my own account that Stalin is certainly a Dictator, which does not mean that he is as bad as Hitler. As for the heroism, initiative, sacrifice and all the rest that he speaks of, these qualities have equally been displayed by Germans, willingly or unwillingly. That does not prove that Stalin is not a Dictator. —R. D. K.)

(Continued from page 24)

a man and a woman (perhaps such a discussion is only possible to French artists). The man maintained that the female body is more beautiful than the male, because in the case of the male body, the smooth lines of beauty are broken at a certain point, while in the female body there is no break. "But it is precisely on that account that I think the male body more beautiful", said the lady. Is it not clear from this that the idea of beauty originated in sex appeal, which some artists try to deride?

It is excusable for an artist to obey whatever conventions may be imposed by society, because he cannot afford to come into conflict with the law. But to try to glorify these conventions in the name of decency is to stultify one's claim to be called an artist. The most ridiculous point about the resolution was that it referred to commercial artists only. Since their productions are exhibited in the press, it is not likely that they will risk the charge of obscenity. Of course it is another thing to say that the figures they use should be appropriate, but is a resolution required for that? No artist in his senses, in advertising footwear for instance, would show a woman lying on her bed and wearing nothing but her shoes. This is a matter of common sense. But to pretend that the 'fair sex' can be insulted by any kind of figure, nude or otherwise, is utter nonsense. An in-artistic figure will shock anybody who has a sense of the artistic, but when a lady spoke in favour of the resolution and protested in vehement tones against artists who dared to insult her sex, I could not but laugh. I wonder if she knew what

(Continued from page 28)

suggested that this war is the last of its kind. But it is clear that the possibilities of the triumph of the forces of reaction are being speedily exhausted. Should there be a lull in the storm, an opportunity will surely come to the friends of democracy to rally their ranks. The establishment of democracy in the territories of some of the bigger States, a closer harmony amongst them on all kindred concerns, their constant and timely vigilance and resistance against the reactionary forces, efforts to impart material and mental comforts to the masses, propaganda all the world over for a re-orientation of the mental values—these alone should engage the attention of the visionaries. The birth of a new order is no doubt implicit in the complete destruction of the old, but as the older system approaches its end, a revolution of thought, a re-valuation of all traditional ideas based on the manifest inadequacy of the dying order and a clear-cut picture of the new, becomes necessary and unavoidable. This has been the case at all critical periods of human history: this epoch of civilization is too critical to be able to escape it. What is necessary in the world to-day is a broadening of the mind of man, a definite ethical progress, so that the heart may keep pace with the head and the hands, and the common man be able to participate in that material and cultural progress which has hitherto been the privilege of the favoured few. The pressure of circumstances and the force of education in the ideas of the coming order, alone will lead to that end, to the birth of a finished type of democracy in which progress will be consummate and universal.

(Continued from page 26)

peasants. Every innovation, even in tillage and agricultural technique, was opposed by the pious fatalism of these men as contrary to God's will." Is not this the attitude of most priests, whether they belong to Eastern, the Roman Catholic or the Protestant Churches all over the world?

Mr. Brailsford continues to say: "If this was religion, then religion had to be fought, and the Communists did it with some understanding of the mind of these unlettered peasants whom they had to drag out of the Dark Ages. I watched them at work in the villages in 1920." They would stage a dramatic exposure of some saintly charlatan's miracle and then follow it up with some popular lessons in natural science. I attended a public debate between an orthodox priest and an atheist lecturer in a provincial town, conducted with perfect freedom and even with courtesy. All the time the Communists were conscious that they were fighting famine; for they could not have contrived to free Russia, save by winning the militant co-operation of the younger generation against the inertia of the elder peasants, who clustered more than ever round the Church after Tsar and landlord had vanished.

For the rest, it must be plainly said that the Communists will no more tolerate a clericalist opposition than they tolerate a Liberal, or a Trotskyist, or any other organised opposition. Priests under the earlier constitution were disfranchised, as all "malignants" were after our own Civil War. That is no longer the case, but every use of the Church, however slight or indirect, for political ends, is forbidden and punished. The Catholic Church,

needless to say, stands on an incomparably higher intellectual and moral level, but it is the Church of the Polish landed aristocracy, or in its Uniate branch of the separatist Ukrainian *kulaks*. The quarrel, which led to some impolitic execution of leading priests, was one of class, or of nationalism, rather than of religion in the strict sense of the word.

For Christians the controversy, in so far as it is honest and well-informed, turns chiefly on Education. The Churches may maintain no schools of their own, not even Sunday schools. Russian children may attend public worship, and of course they may receive individual instruction in their parents' faith. But in the Soviet schools, the instruction is dogmatically rationalist. Literature tinged with religious feeling is banned as counter-revolutionary. These are the facts; to discuss them adequately in a few lines is impossible.

Ideally speaking it is wrong to fetter a child's mind with the dogmas of either camp before its reasoning powers are fully developed. Yet only by teaching science and history can its mind be developed. Can these be taught without a bias? Doubtfully in this, or any other country; Russia makes no such claims. Communists believe that tolerance of heresy can only begin when a basis of rational Communistic doctrine is generally accepted. The more Liberals know of Russian history, the less will they incline to throw stones. The best hope for the growth of a wider intellectual toleration in Russia is that she should emerge from this war victorious. Her excessive dread of internal opposition has always been linked with her sound suspicions of the external enemy.

If a nation values anything more than freedom, it will lose its freedom ; and the worry of it is that if it is comfort or money that it values more, it will lose that too.

—Somerset Maugham.

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All contributions, correspondence, press cuttings, journals in exchange, enquiries regarding advertisement rates, etc., should be addressed to Mr. Abraham Solomon, Asstt. Editor, "REASON," 59, Karmani Building, Arthur Road, Bombay, 11.

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CONTENTS.

Dew Drops by Abraham Solomon		37
Hindu Logic by R. D. Karve		39
The Catholic Church Woos Atheist Russia by Clare Jowsey		41
Something About Marxism by Prem Nath	.. ..	43
Sir Raghunath P. Paranjpye by Rao Bahadur Dr. D. L. Sahasrabuddhe	.. ..	45
Notes and News	.. ..	49
A Plea for Reason by Narayan S. Bapat	.. ..	51

DEW DROPS

Mr. Gandhi writing in a recent issue of the *Harijan* in an article entitled "Criminal Assaults" giving advice to women in distress says, "Parents and husbands should instruct women to become fearless. It can best be learnt from a living faith in God. Though He is invisible He is one's unfailing protector. He who has his faith is the most fearless of all." We can assure Mr. Gandhi that Indian women have not yet lost their faith in God. If and when that happens Indian women will neither need advice from Mahatmas nor protection from supernatural sources. As far as we know it is rather a belief in God which makes people inactive in face of danger rather than the lack of it. It is the false belief that some benevolent supernatural power will protect them that prevents people from doing all they can for themselves.

* * * *

But again Mr. Gandhi says that "God is one's unfailing protector". What about the thousands of women who have been molested without receiving any protection from supernatural sources? Mr. Gandhi might urge that they did not have sufficient faith. What would you think of a man who would not protect a woman although he is fully capable of doing so? We do not mind people persisting in false beliefs but they

should at least not make the object of their belief rouse contempt. At the end of the article Mr. Gandhi comes to the astounding conclusion that "only he who loses his life shall save it". This is too much for us mortals to understand.

* * * *

The following two notes from the London *Freethinker* are worth noting :

Rosenberg, the German "racial" expert with a Jewish name, has framed a plan for displacing the Bible in Germany. "Mein Kampf" is to take the place of the Bible in German Churches. The State Church is to be anti-Atheistic and one in which all German men and women, youths and girls "acknowledge God and his eternal works." The matter is interesting because, first it disproves the religious talk of Hitler and his gang being all Atheists—they are, as a matter of fact, mainly religious. Next it shows that in the attempt to enslave Germans perpetually the gang can find no better implement than religion, and thirdly, in establishing a National Church where only one form of religious beliefs is permitted, Hitler and his gang are pilfering the ideal of the Roman Church, and indeed, of every established Church in Christendom. The brutalities of Hitlerism should not blind intelligent people to these pregnant facts.

* * * *

"Mein Kampf" is to be placed on every altar, and worshippers will acknowledge it as "the greatest of all documents," as it also "embodies the purest and truest ethics for the present and the future life." What a lack of originality there is about all this. The Christian Church said this many centuries ago of the Bible, and the Churches here are still proclaiming the same "religious truth." And minus the intensity of the bestial brutality displayed by Nazism.

The German gang are now showing plainly their religious origin. A greater display of beastliness than the Church displayed is a matter of detail.

* * * *

It has been reported to us that recently a cunning and miserly old Christian fell very ill. On hearing this, two priests hastened to his bedside and told him that as his end was approaching he must make some provision for the good of his soul before he died. They told him that he could do this by leaving half of his money to mother Church, and that the priest would take care of his soul. The old man however did not fall in with their scheme and told them that he was not willing to do so. On hearing this the priests told him that Jesus would be very angry with him for not doing as he was requested. "What will you answer Jesus?" they asked. "Well", replied the old man, "I'll say, 'like you O Christ I died between two thieves.'"

—Abraham Solomon.

We live in an age of science. Most people think that science has served humanity by producing electric light, motor cars, aeroplanes, etc. That is only a partial view. In fact, few realise the outlook that science has produced during the last two hundred years. Science has given us a view of the universe.

The feature of India depends on a courageous application of scientific knowledge. As man learns to apply the scientific method to the problems of every-day life, in that measure he will rise to and reach his allotted height. Let the dogs of conservatism, ignorance and fanaticism bark, but the glorious caravan of the Indian nation will move on with irresistible force.

—C. V. Raman.

HINDU LOGIC

By R. D. KARVE

ALL the knowledge of the Hindus, even scientific knowledge, seems to have originated from the religious requirements of the sacrifice. By the way, it is amusing to find that the word "Hindu" was first applied to them by Muslims in a derogatory sense. Some Hindus now try to derive it from the river Sindhu (Indus), but the word "Hindu" is absent from ancient Sanscrit literature, which uses the word "Arya" (Aryan) instead. The religion of the Aryas, or Hindus, is based on the sacrifice, which has to be performed at a given time on a given day, as indeed all important things are still done by the orthodox on auspicious days. As only certain relative positions of the stars and planets were considered auspicious, it became necessary to find out when these positions occurred and this gave rise to astronomy, in which ancient Hindus had made surprising progress. Of course the current Hindu calendar is astronomically wrong, but this is due to the fact that it has never been brought up to date, owing to the complete eclipse of all Hindu research for several centuries.

So also difficulties were often raised as to why certain rites at a sacrifice had to be performed in a certain way, and this gave rise to the science of argument. In fact Hindu logic is not content with laying down rules for correct reasoning, but also goes on to teach how to silence the opponent. Hardly anywhere will such hair-splitting be found as in Hindu religious books. No wonder that the Hindu religion has produced even atheists like the well-known Charvaka! Once you begin to reason, there is no knowing where

you will stop, and the Vedanta (literally the last part of the Vedas) is a system of philosophy which does not admit a personal God.

Hindu logic is not therefore merely a science of reasoning. It considers different sources of knowledge, ways of testing the truth of so-called knowledge, and also such things as the existence of the soul and the theory of re-incarnation, in addition to the science of argument. All this is of course a fruitful source of confusion, as some people suppose the Vedas to be the work of God and insist that their value as evidence is as great as that of direct knowledge obtained by observation or experiment. The Vedas are obviously not the work of a single person well-versed in logic, and consequently abound in contradictions, which are of course fatal in a work regarded as absolutely true. It became the principal concern of religious writers therefore to reconcile these contradictions, and the proper interpretation of Vedic texts preoccupied them to a considerable extent.

There is no doubt that some people gave far more importance to correct reasoning than to the reconciliation of religious texts and such people naturally incurred great opprobrium, as is indicated by such judgments as "People who have studied the science of reasoning become foxes in the next birth", or "People who showed disrespect for religious books on the strength of logic should be excommunicated". It is these people who tried to establish a science of logic independently of religion.

The first detailed work on the science of logic is the "Nyaya-Sutras" by Gautama. There is a good deal of difference of opinion as to the date of this work, but one Bengali scholar puts it at 150 A.D. A detailed commentary on this work was written by Vatsyayana, who lived in the 4th century A. D. The original work as well as the commentary have served as the bases of practically all the later books on the subject, none of which appeared however till the seventh century. There is an amusing story told of one of these writers who defended the Vedic religion against the Buddhists, very successfully it seems. Having gone to Puri once to see the famous temple of Jagannath, he found all the doors closed and warned the god thus :—" You are puffed up with pride now, but remember, if the Buddhists attack again, you will be at my mercy." The same writer also advocated Monotheism and a number of monotheistic sects were started about this time. Personally I do not think polytheism less logical than monotheism, because with many gods, it would be easier to account for the contradictions with which one is faced if one imagines a single god who is omniscient, omnipotent and benevolent. However, religion seems to evolve from polytheism to monotheism, which has also been emphasized by later sects like the Arya Samaj, the Brahmo Samaj and the Prarthana Samaj.

About the end of the 12th century, a writer named Gangesh wrote a standard work emphasizing the importance of correct reasoning as distinguished from religious controversies. This work has had great influence all over India and though the original work contains only about 300 pages, the commentaries on it, according to an expert, will amount to a million pages. About 300 years later, a commen-

tator of his named Raghunath laid stress on the importance of logic as against tradition and said boldly that tradition is of no importance if it is not logically consistent. It will be realized that this required some courage in a tradition-ridden country, where even logicians were inclined to assume the truth of the Vedas without any proof whatever.

Hindu logicians distinguish between four different kinds of knowledge : 1. Direct knowledge, as when we see a horse and know that it is a horse ; 2. Inference, as when we infer that the sun is on the meridian when a correct clock strikes twelve ; 3. Knowledge obtained from words, as from history or newspaper reports ; 4. Knowledge by comparison, as when somebody tells us or we see in a dictionary that the bison is a wild animal which looks like a bull, and then, on seeing such an animal, we take it to be a bison. Obviously the last two kinds will hardly be considered knowledge by modern logicians. We know that what is called history is often imaginary, as when British historians invented the story of the Black Hole of Calcutta or called Shivaji a " mountain rat " just to disparage him. The last, knowledge by comparison, is perfectly absurd as a method of obtaining knowledge, though it may stand us in good stead when nothing better is available.

They also classified knowledge in another way : definite knowledge and doubtful knowledge. An instance of the first is when we are sure that we see a tree and say " This is a tree ". But if we see something in the distance which makes us say " Is it a tree or a man " ?, this is doubtful knowledge. Obviously this last would not be called knowledge at all by modern

(Please turn to page 52)

The Catholic Church Woos Atheist Russia

By **CLARE JOWSEY**

(Reproduced from the *New Zealand Rationalist*)

1917! When civilization seemed doomed in deadly struggle, the world shuddered at the news of the Russian collapse. Desperate in defeat, oppressed, starving, suffering from a thousand wrongs, the people of a sixth of the earth sent autocracy crashing from its throne. With Czarism fell its greatest ally, the Russian Orthodox Church. In the dark winter of that memorable year, bitter conflict kept Europe's collective mind tied to its own desperate needs, but in the Vatican, where dire situations are judged by the standards of opportunism the news was hailed with very real relief. The Catholic Church for centuries had yearned to lead Russia to salvation; it had even petitioned Peter the Great to shepherd his errant flock back to the Papal fold.

Imagine the tragedy to the church of a hundred million God-fearing, ignorant peasants following an almost Roman doctrine and ritual, yet not one pious soul sending to Rome a kopek of Peter's Pence!

Here in the revolution was a pretty pie from which the papal finger might with caution extract a juicy plum.

The Church found the Soviet Government very tolerant. With other minor sects, it was freed from the disabilities previously imposed upon it by the Orthodox Church. Catholics were so few, comparatively, in Russia that, so long as they did not pursue a reactionary policy, the Government took very little notice of their proceedings. Indeed, during 1918, the

Catholics were allowed to hold their first Corpus Christi procession through the streets of Petrograd.

One would gather from Roman Catholic papers to-day that, under the old Russian autocracy, the Church had enjoyed a wonderful religious freedom, and had suffered persecution only since the bad Bolsheviks came to power. It is a very real fact, however, that the reverse was the case. Until 1905, the church was severely repressed, and, even after that, laboured under irksome restrictions until it gained full liberty after the revolution.

The ambitious Catholic Church, however, desired something more than freedom of conscience and religious practice; it aimed at power. In 1922 the time seemed ripe for the Vatican to establish itself firmly on Russian soil. As a result of the war and its aftermath of revolution and counter-revolution, the Russian people were perishing from famine and disease. To their relief came, among others, Father Edmund Walsh. Although admitted to the Soviet Union on the condition that he would not carry on religious propaganda, the worthy Jesuit determined to let no good chance pass him and "distributed parcels and served soup under the portrait of Pius XI in the act of giving a blessing."

Cloak to Reaction

In M. Sherwood's book, "The Soviet War on Religion," good grounds are given for the belief that this outwardly friendly Catholic organization served to hide activities of an extremely subversive nature.

Father Walsh, after leaving the Soviet Union, published a brochure upon the persecution and cruelty inflicted on Catholic Priests by the "Reds." That the booklet, to say the least, was highly coloured, seems to be proved by the words of Sir Esmond Ovey in the British House of Commons in 1930.

"There is no religious persecution in Russia in the strict sense of the term 'persecution,' and no case has been discovered of a priest or anyone else being punished for practising religion."

From the British Ambassador to Moscow, a man of all men likely to obtain the truth, these are words of the greatest importance, and they do not stand alone. They are confirmed by the statements of religious bodies themselves. In 1930 four leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church stated: "There never has been, nor is there, any persecution of religion in the U.S.S.R." We would not deny, however, that priests and laity have been punished in the Soviet Union, but it must be fully understood that the punishment was meted out, not for their religious activities, but for acts against the State. From the Soviet standpoint these men were counter-revolutionaries, seeking to undermine the new people's State. That there were probably grounds upon which to base this claim may be gathered from the consistently pro-fascist, anti-socialist policy of the Vatican.

Chance of Happiness

We must grasp the fact that the Russian State did not need to persecute religion in order to destroy it. Before the revolution the only solace of the people was to be found in religion. In return for a patient acceptance of the bitter realities of life, they were offered a harp and crown of gold in the glorious hereafter. The new

State gave the people education and a knowledge of science, the two greatest weapons against superstition. It offered them a chance of happiness here on earth. It brought leisure to enjoy art and the theatre, but, above all, it offered employment and wages to all instead of cold and grudging charity doled out from the purse of a wealthy and despotic church.

So far as Russian politics are concerned, we Rationalists, as an organization, maintain a dispassionate attitude. If it could be proved that Russia had persecuted religion as such, we would in accordance with our policy, join in the censure that would justly ensue. As Rationalists we stand for religious freedom, without special concessions to religious bodies in regard to property and taxation. As such a state of affairs seems to exist in the U.S.S.R., that is all that concerns us as an organization.

While we enquire into the Russian method of dealing with Catholics, it may be of interest to compare the Catholic method of treating Russians. To do this we must go back to that tragic blunder, the Treaty of Versailles, wherein millions of Orthodox Russians were passed under the control of Catholic Poland. It has, perhaps, never occurred to the reader that tales of Soviet persecution of religion were a smokescreen to hide from the world the outrage and cruelty inflicted upon these unfortunate people by pious Catholic Poles. In Warsaw, the Greek Church was blown up and in the whole of Poland in one year five hundred Greek Orthodox churches were closed.

Upon the peoples of the Ukraine and White Russia fell the heaviest blows. Unwilling to enter the Polish Republic, their national and religious characteristics repressed, they were in a constant state of

SOMETHING ABOUT MARXISM

By **Dr. PREM NATH**

THOUGH I am not an authority, nevertheless I would like to express my idea of Marxism as unfortunately I disagree with the opinion of Prof. R. D. Karve as put in an article, namely "The Marxist opium" published in the December issue of *Reason*.

I maintain that Marxism is the philosophy of revolution; that there is nothing mystic or unscientific in it. If rationalism or science can be said to have something mystic in them then of course Marxism can also be admitted to have mysticism, for Marxism is based upon rationalism and science. Like rationalism it is also not a dogma or a closed system.* Its method of approaching nature and life is the same as that of rationalism. But its sphere of action is wider than that of rationalism as it does not hesitate to throw its light on the existing economical and social order in their rational and logical sequence. Apart from this there is another difference which distinguishes it from rationalism. Marxism not only examines the historical development of philosophy in different ages but also philosophers themselves. It is not merely concerned with showing that they were wrong but explaining why under particular social conditions such and such theories are likely to gain wider acceptance.

Under the light of the latest developments in science the world can no longer be viewed as only a mechanical static unit. The Newtonian idea of the operations of rigid natural laws in nature is no longer considered as perfect. The mechanical materialism of 19th century whose founder

was Newton, regarded the world as a vast complicated piece of machinery; a clock-work mechanism which having once been set in motion with all its intricate details of cogs and wheels ran smoothly and relentlessly along its predestined course, according to the laws laid by Newton. In fact the laws of nature were put in an idealised form. But the theory of relativity and quantum theory have changed the picture. Prof. H. Levy says: "The determinism of 19th century considered that these exact scientific laws were really nature's laws and that what you actually found in the world of reality was only an approximation to those perfect laws. We now see, however, that this was putting the cart before the horse. Scientific laws no longer occupy the magnificent and impregnable position they once did. Whatever validity a scientific law has is shown by the fact that the law is a good approximate to the operations that actually go on in this complex and changing world."

Marx rejected the idea of mechanical and static explanation of nature long ago and propounded the theory of dialectical materialism. He insisted on the temporary, relative and approximate character of human knowledge of nature and in this he is being supported wholeheartedly by modern science and logic. The basic idea of dialectical materialism is, that this world is not an intricate machine of fully fashioned objects or static cosmos but a complex of processes where objects are undergoing incessant and constant changes. "Nature is in a state of perpetual flux, in fact it consists of processes not things" as Prof.

It was a very happy surprise to me to read the name Dr. R. P. Paranjpye in the New Year Honours' list for 1942. I call this happy because a great gentleman has been honoured. We seldom get names of all-sided great men in these lists. Sir Raghunath is great in his intellectual powers, in his academic qualifications, in his sacrifices in the service of his country in matters educational, social, political, and above all in his sympathies towards the progress of rationalism in the country.

The announcement was a surprise because Government ought to have honoured Dr. Paranjpye long ago, at least when he was a member of the Council of the Secretary of State of India. It was therefore a surprise that Government after all rectified their sins of omission. Some people are against the acceptance of titles. They, however, forget that titles are, after all, themselves colourless and odourless and they take the colour and the odour of the person that wears the titles. When the Government offers a title it shows its appreciation of the work done by the person to whom the title is offered. There is therefore nothing wrong in accepting the title offered. It may be that sometimes Government offers titles to persons who help them in their work against the interests of the public. This cannot, therefore, be taken as a sufficient ground to reject titles altogether. Condemn the person if he is bad but not the title he wears. I have given this hint because there may be some people ready to blame Sir Raghunath for having accepted the title.

I have a special appreciation for Sir Raghunath because out of all the leaders we have, I am in greater agreement with Sir Raghunath's views than with the views of any other leader. I am in agreement with his views on matters social, political and religious. We are both rationalists. I fully agree with him that we should be rationalists not only on religious questions but also on other questions in our life. We must be rationalists through and through and our attitude towards everything must be rationalistic.

Sir Raghunath is far senior to me in every way and I never came in very close contact with him, but I can say that on many occasions I was sufficiently close to him to understand him well. I saw Sir Raghunath for the first time in 1893 at Prof. D. K. Karve's residence. He was then studying at the Fergusson College and was staying

SIR RAGHUNATH

By **RAO BAHADUR Dr. D.**

with Prof. Karve who is his near relation. I was only a small boy then, just ready to enter an English school. What I remember as something striking was his big head, clean shaved with a tuft of hair in the old orthodox fashion. I came to know from the elderly persons that the boy known then as Raghunath, was a brilliant hard-working student and that he always stood first in all the examinations. This was enough for a boy like me to be in awe and keep myself at a sufficient distance from him to avoid any enquiries being made about my progress in the class.

Once I heard Mr. N. C. Kelkar telling us at a meeting about Sir Raghunath's mastery over mathematics. When he appeared for the Previous Examination of the Bombay University Mr. N. C. Kelkar was a supervisor. He saw Sir Raghunath leaving the Examination Hall in less than two hours although the mathematics paper was for three hours. Mr. Kelkar thought that he perhaps found the paper to be difficult and therefore left the Hall without solving the paper; but at the time of the result he found that Sir Raghunath was first in the Examination as usual. This shows his mastery over mathematics.

We are told that Sir Raghunath was a rationalist even when he was studying at college. At one of the meetings of the Debating Society of the college he said, "I challenge you to produce your God before me and I shall deal with him suitably". That shows that he was not afraid of saying openly what he thought was right. He has somewhat a rough way of expressing himself which may have an offensive appearance, but those that know him well know that he does not want to offend anyone.

Sir Raghunath Parbhootam P. (Bombay), D.Sc. (Cal.), b. Maratha High School, Sec. St. John's College, Cambridge of India Scholar; bracketed 1899. Principal & Prof. of Poona, 1902-24. Hon. Association, London, has taken part and educational movements. Chancellor of Indian Women's Leg. Council 1913-23, 1927. Medal in 1916. Minister, B. Member Reforms Inquiry & Territorial Forces Committee 1924-26. Member Chancellor, Lucknow University Liberal Federation 1924, 1930. The Crux of the Indian Problem.

I P. PARANJPYE

L. SAHASRABUDDHE

With age Sir Raghunath has not lost his vigour or keenness but perhaps he now tries to remove harshness from his expression. At one of the meetings of the senate of the Women's University a proposition was moved to make religious education compulsory in institutions affiliated to that University. Sir Raghunath

was then the Vice-chancellor of that University. He thought that that kind of proposition might be carried; he therefore sent in an amendment to the effect that the University recommended that the affiliated institutions may give religious education. He thought that this amendment may pass and thus he would be able to ward off the danger of compulsory religious education. When he came to the meeting he found to his surprise that there were a good many members opposed to the original proposition. He, therefore, not only withdrew his amendment but supported the opponents with a strong speech and we were able to reject the proposition with a good majority.

When Sir Raghunath is convinced of the rightness of any proposal he upholds it notwithstanding the opposition of senior men in public life. He opposed the Late Lok. Tilak on several occasions and sometimes carried his point of view even though Lok. Tilak tried to persuade the public to the opposite side. I quite remember

two or three such occasions. One of these is worth mentioning.

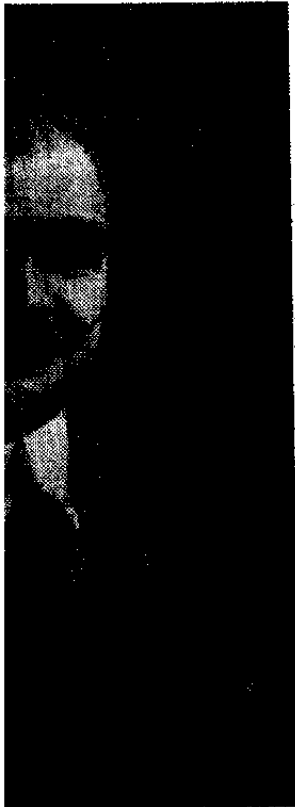
A proposal that the Poona Municipality should introduce compulsory and free education in Poona was once being discussed by the Poona public. The orthodox party led by late Lok. Tilak said that

primary education should be made compulsory only for boys while the progressive party under the leadership of Dr. Paranjpye maintained that primary education should be made compulsory both for boys and girls alike. The non-Brahmin party which was then growing joined hands with the progressive party in this connection and at a meeting held to discuss the question Lok. Tilak learnt a lesson of his life that it was easy to oppose the members of the progressive party at a Congress meeting, but it was impossible for him to face a meeting, much less make a speech, when opposed by a group of people from the masses. Theoretically Sir Raghunath's point of view was carried out notwithstanding Lok. Tilak's opposition.

Sir Raghunath's book entitled *The Crux of the Indian Problem* was out in right time when the religious feelings in India had started taking a wrong turn and entering politics and creating trouble in social matters. Other countries are not altogether free from religious animosities but in India things are worse and getting more and more so day by day. In Europe the fire that burnt men alive is much kept down, but is not yet put out completely and ashes thrown in the rivers. In India the religions are invading other spheres of life. We know that religious differences are not the only things which stand in the way of the Indians in getting their political rights but we know for certain that the differences have become a very good tool in the hands of the British Government. Sir Raghunath's hint was quite opportune but nobody gave any heed to what he said and we are reaping the fruit of our negligence.

Even now it is not too late and young men and women should see to it that people soaked in religion do not get any influence. We must have leaders who take a rationalistic view in all matters. Religions had their days. They have outlived their time. They must now go in the background quietly, otherwise a time will come when they will be forced into the background.

I have seen Sir Raghunath as Mr. Paranjpye, as Wrangler, as Principal, as Dr. Paranjpye, and now I see him as Sir Raghunathrao Paranjpye but he is still the same simple, outspoken, open-minded Paranjpye. We all wish him a long, useful and happy life.



Paranjpye, M.A. (Cantab.), B.Sc.,
 16th February 1876. Educ.
 Fergusson College, Poona,
 (Fell.) Paris & Göttingen, Govt.
 Senior Wrangler at Cambridge
 Mathematics Fergusson College,
 & the Rationalist Press Association
 part in all social, political
 Bombay Presidency. Vice-
 University 1916-20; Bombay
 awarded the Kaiser-i-Hind Gold
 Government 1921-32, 1927.
 Committee 1924. Auxiliary and
 24; Indian Taxation Inquiry
 India Council, 1927-32; Vice
 1932-33; President of National
 PUBLICATIONS: Gokhale Karve,
 Rationalism in Practice.

J. B. S. Haldane has put it. "Both we ourselves and the World of which we are a part are in a continual state of change" says Prof. H. Levy. So, to say that a thing preserves its identity through time and space is a pure abstraction. Nothing is stationary. Change is the only thing permanent as old Heraclitus taught. Even our scientific conceptions are not stable for they change with the advance of knowledge. "Again in spite of much popular misunderstanding," says Prof. Levy, "science is not a definite clearly defined body of knowledge. It is never possible to say that this or that is the last word on any scientific subject. On the contrary science is continually expanding; it is in continuous state of change. Yesterday matter was thought to be the fundamental stuff of which our universe was made, this morning it was atoms, this afternoon it was electrons, this evening it is something much less definite, a wave, radiation. What may it be tomorrow?"

So dialectically nothing is absolute or sacred; everything is characteristic of the process of formation and destruction. From this it follows that the reality of everything is relative and not permanent. All our knowledge about everything is relative. In other words it can be said that everything is and is not at the same time, for everything is in a state of flux or impermanence. The object perceived at one moment is not scientifically the same when perceived the next moment for it has already undergone molecular, chemical and climatic changes, though to all intents and purposes it seems to be the same object. It is the same, yet it is not the same, for it has changed.

Again in a living structure where growth occurs, it is by addition of new matter, not only to the surface of the structure,

but throughout every part of the mass. But at the same time all living structures are undergoing constant decay. Thus a man's body is not composed of exactly the same particles day after day, although to all intents he remains the same individual. In the words of Engels, "Every organised being is every moment the same and not the same. Every moment it assimilates new matter from without and gets rid of other matter. Every moment some cells of his body die and others build themselves anew."

The law of contradiction is not opposed to dialectical logic. On the contrary it is an important part of it. The application of dialectics is only possible when we perceive a changing object from its internal and relative opposite aspects while the law of contradiction is concerned with only one aspect of a thing at a time under given conditions. Science makes a definite statement about a certain aspect of a thing and insists that it is true with regard to that particular aspect of the object. But it does not mean that it is also true of other aspects of the same object. Science studies the changing world by the method of abstraction. The scientist separates off from the rest of the universe any object he wishes to study and considers only those qualities of the thing which are significant for the purpose in hand, ignoring what is irrelevant for that purpose. Prof. H. Levy says, "The point is that we easily separate off for examination tiny separate fractions. The solar system, the earth, the building, the floor, the body, the hand, the cigarette. But notice that we only do this for simplicity's sake, to make our examination more easy. The separation is nevertheless quite artificial." Though it is indispensable for the understanding of the

different aspects of a thing, it cannot help us to understand properly the relative changes of the changing world. Of course by the study of one-sided aspect of a changing and unstable thing the complex whole cannot be comprehensively understood.

Prof. J. B. S. Haldane writes "We professors are always trying to give such a complete description, so that we can deduce all natural happenings from a few general principles. These attempts are successful upto a point, but we always find that nature is richer than we had thought. And the newly-discovered properties of things appear to us as contradictions. Thus at the present moment both light and matter are found to have two sets of properties—one set resembling those of particles, and another set resembling those of waves".

It should have become clear as to why Marx arrived at the conclusion that things really embody a union of opposites, whose struggle and interaction makes them unstable and results in their development into something else. The History of evolution of the world, of life amply proves it. Every new stage of evolution can be shown to be an outcome of the two opposite processes—destructive and constructive—going on incessantly within nature.

Prof. J. B. S. Haldane says, "But these internal contradictions do not mean that nature is irrational. They mean that it is unstable, our brains are finite. Nature is probably infinite, certainly two large for us to take in. So our account of any material phenomenon is a simplification. We naturally think of things as neatly rounded off and therefore tend to exaggerate their stability. However, the more we study nature, the more we find that what is apparently stable turns out to be the battlefield of opposing tendencies. The con-

tinents are the field of a struggle between erosion, which tends to flatten them, and folding and volcanizing, which builds mountains. For this reason they have history. Animals and plants are never completely adapted to their environment On the contrary they evolve just because they are imperfect. The same principle holds for human societies".

All other deductions of Marx are the result of this fundamental dynamic attitude. Aided by the discoveries of natural science, the researches in Anthropology and the dialectical method of reasoning, Marx made an exhaustive investigation in social history and as a result gave us the materialist interpretation of history. Formerly the function of historians was simply to record the social events chronologically and the events were thought to be happening at random, due to the will of some arbitrary God. But Marx proved that just as in the physical world, nothing takes place without a cause, similarly in history in the process of social development, everything that happens is determined by a cause, is the result of previous events. That a successive stage of society is the necessary outcome of the change brought about in the social order of the previous stage. If we study human history from the remotest period of human existence to our times, we find that the social order of society has been changing every now and then into newer forms. But why did it ever change? What laws determine this process of social evolution? With the development of mechanistic materialism man was regarded as exclusively to be the victim of his environment. But Marx proved that though man's behaviour, his being and activities are determined by the environment in

which he lives, at the same time, he reacts upon them and shapes them by his reactions. Arts and crafts, and science have been and are being applied to transform the very environment in which he lives. Every advance man makes in the application of science compels him to make a corresponding adjustment, a change of habit to suit the changed environment he himself had created. Marx says, "By acting on nature outside himself and transforming it man simultaneously changed his own nature". From this Marx deduced the fundamental law of social evolution. He established that man's current ideas and values, his feelings, his laws and religions are moulded by the social environment in which he lives and those environments are themselves determined by the prevalent mode of production. A particular social order is based on a specific mode of production. And it is threatened with destruction as soon a new mode of production begins to develop inside it, and which ultimately outgrows and destroys the old one. With the change of the economic foundations of the period all the superstructure based upon it which is expressed in legal, political and religious forms also changes.

After ascertaining this fundamental law of history, Marx argued that as history is nothing but the history of the changes occurring in the mode of production and since these changes have been brought about by man in the past ; there is no reason to believe that such changes will not be brought about by him in future. As the capitalist system replaced the previous form of society so it will also be replaced with a new form of society with a new mode of production, if the social evolution of man and the advancement of knowledge is not to end. Indeed it must evolve—it cannot

stay still, the very notion of the fixity of dogma, or of knowledge or of ideas or of social system is an error and is wrong.

Marx's predictions about the future course of humanity are not based upon any belief in a benevolent universe or mysterious nature interested in human affairs, but on the concrete facts and the appreciation of the laws which governed social evolution. It is said that the future course of human evolution did not take the same direction as predicted by Marx. He said that a change in a particular mode of production of society does not take place unless it has exhausted all its possibilities. After analysing the present capitalist mode of production of Europe he said that the transition from a capitalist society to a communist society must be carried out by a dictatorship of the wage-earning classes (i.e., proletariat). By proletariat we mean that class of society which has arisen within the capitalist system, which has no vested interests nor 'stakes in the country, who has nothing to sell except labour. Such a class as defined above has not yet fully taken shape in England though it is highly industrialised for the trade unionists still have vested interests in the country. Moreover the capitalist system has not yet fully exhausted its possibilities for it has developed into Imperialism. But the Russian revolution thoroughly vindicates the sociological theory of Marx as laid down in the communist manifesto of 1848 and interpreted into practice by Lenin. Though Czarist Russia was not so highly industrialised as other European countries were, the Russian proletariat in 1917 was very highly 'proletarianised', in the Marxist sense. "It was oppressed and remarkably concentrated in large towns and great factories; it was not scattered all over the country

in small groups, like the French wage workers; it had under the Czarist regime no 'stake in the country' as has the British trade unionist, no hope of individual advancement such as gleamed before the American worker. It was as nearly as possible pure proletariat, pure wage-slave organised by its masters in gangs which were as nearly as possible chain gangs and it was thus admirably fitted to make a proletarian revolution," writes Mr. G. D. H. Cole. As regards the difference of income in Russia it seems to be very near to equality when compared with the colossal difference between the income of a labourer and that of a prince or a big millowner.

It is not just and logical to say that Marxism has the intoxicating effects like opium. For Marx described religion as opium to check the rising consciousness in the interest of the dominating class. Perhaps it would be more proper to call it an antidote to such opium as it stimulates the rising consciousness of people and urges them to analyse their social and allied problems in their true perspective. The essence of Marxism is that nothing is final, nothing is fixed, nothing endures for ever. It is not possible to say that this or that is the last word on any subject. Moreover human knowledge has considerably progressed since the time of Marx and things have happened which could not possibly be foreseen at that time. So if by applying the principle of Marxism it is found that Marx's findings have to be amplified or elaborated, or certain conclusions at which he arrived have to be modified, it would be against Marxism not to do so. Not to do so would be to destroy Marxism, for in that case it will become a dogma and not an ever expanding and developing rational philosophy of life and would lose its dynamic character.

In the words of Mr. M. N. Roy, "Marxism inspires man to change the world and himself in the process." But those who are in a comfortable situation at present would like the present state of things, with a few minor modifications here and there, to be eternal. They do not want them to change because their interests, powers and privileges are bound up with the established social order.

NOTES AND NEWS

On Sunday 15th March the Rationalist Association of India holds its 12th Annual General Meeting and Reunion at the Radio Club, Bombay. This time, due to the lighting restrictions and other inconveniences we have been compelled to arrange a lunch instead of the usual Dinner. Mr. M. R. A. Baig, Sheriff of Bombay, has kindly consented to be the guest of honour. We hope, all those, who can, will make it a point to attend. Those who wish to attend and have not yet informed the secretaries accordingly should immediately do so as it is absolutely necessary in order that proper arrangements may be made.

* * * *

We once again draw the attention of our readers to the special offer, made on the second cover page of this issue, which is open upto the 31st of this month only, and hope that those who have not yet taken advantage of the same will lose no time. We also request our members to make a special effort to get new members. That is the most effective way of helping the Association.

* * * *

It has been decided to form Rationalist societies in different parts of India which would carry on local activities for the spread of Rationalism in their respective areas. The Societies will be affiliated to the R. A. I.

and will be responsible to the same. The decisions and suggestions of the Executive Committee as to the lines on which they should work will be placed before the General Meeting for confirmation.

* * * *

We gratefully acknowledge the following :—

P. N. Sinha, Anisabad, Rs. 5 ; G. B. Singh, Lahore, Rs. 5 ; Kishore Premchand, Rs. 5 ; Ardeshir K. Irani, Rs. 5 ; Rao Bahadur Dr. D. L. Sahasrabuddhe, Poona, Rs. 5 ; Lt.-Col. Dickey, Shrinagar, Rs. 5 ; Dr. D. D. Karve, Poona, Rs. 5 ; E. Benjamin, Rs. 5 ; Dr. M. G. Pradhan, Rs. 5 ; Mangalore P. Pai, Rs. 5 ; Justice K. C. Sen, Rs. 5 ; Dr. Frederick Vaz, Rs. 5 ; Clement Hari, Rs. 5.

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A PLEA FOR REASON

By NARAYAN S. BAPAT

MANY a time men fail reason when they are badly in need of it. That is not a sign of strength but a symptom of weakness. There is greatest need of reason when men are confronted with perplexing complexities. Such complexities, culminating today in war, are special features of our vast international social organization. This greatest world-war has challenged our habits, traditions and values. It will also decide our future to a very great extent.

We are living in extremely hard times. Some of us are losing faith in ourselves. But they must remember that the present has arisen from the past and the future is going to result from the present. The major difficulties of our time have resulted from particular human actions in the past. They are not symptoms of God's wrath. Neither are they the incarnation of divine 'Leela' or pranks. Men can try to dissolve them only with their own efforts.

If we want to dissolve our difficulties we must know how these difficulties have come into existence; we must go to their roots. That requires a vigorous search for facts and their analysis. The correct analysis is precipitated only after prejudices or bias and passions are got rid of. That analysis will throw a flood of light on the factors which are responsible for our miseries. That will help men in combating those causes which lead to disaster. Our ways of combating those causes must be devised with the help of the maximum knowledge at our disposal. So also, we must increase our knowledge by observation and by the best method of experiment or experience. This is nothing else but 'The way of Reason.'

There is no God who can manage our affairs. There is no other life after

death for which we should sacrifice our life in this world. And this life can be made happy only by our conscious efforts. It is simply primitive to invent supernatural or any non-human natural will which will see us safe through this chase. So also, it is of no use to us if a few people play the pathological verbal acrobatics of denying the existence of this world or the existence of our miseries. So also, shutting our eyes to our difficulties and relapsing into a trance of inactive meditation cannot put the difficulties out of existence. That will only aggravate them.

We must balance our impulses. We must release our potentialities into conscious actions. That way lies at least the best approach to our problems. Some of us are happy today because their forefathers or they themselves had adopted the way of reason. Many of our calamities are due to the fact that we ourselves or our forefathers failed reason. Reason is not a mystical entity like 'soul' or 'mind' which do not exist. It is the description of a certain way of approaching our problems. Reason is antithetic to blind faiths of all kinds. The earmark of rationalism is depending upon ourselves. That is done by the materialists or by the thorough scientists. The spiritualists, the sentimentalists, the people whose creed is 'faith', theists and the people who are simply prejudiced towards some fictitious thing or who have stopped learning, cannot save us or even cannot save themselves.

What will save us is rationalism. With its help humanity has surmounted innumerable small and big difficulties in the past. With its help only, humanity can hope to survive and be happy. We plead for Reason.

(Continued from page 40)

logicians. So it would seem that the ancient idea of knowledge was far more comprehensive than the modern idea, which can only include in "knowledge" things which are certainly and definitely known.

Memory is also recognised by the ancients as another source of knowledge, which is not included in the four mentioned above. All these are of course further subdivided and the student will find that these ancient writers had a wonderful genius for hair-splitting. Knowledge can only be expressed by a sentence, but a sentence itself is not knowledge. Knowledge is something that happens inside us. The object of the knowledge, such as a tree, may be external (or perhaps internal), but knowledge of the object is always inside us, or what we call subjective. When I know a horse, the knowledge itself is obviously something different from myself and from the horse. The sentence "I see a horse" looks very simple, but it contains two kinds of knowledge. It obviously implies that I know that there is a kind of animal called a horse and also that this is that kind of animal. Also when I say that I am aware of my knowledge of the horse, i.e., to say "I know that I know", this is again a different kind of knowledge, and so on. Some may not easily see the necessity of calling this a different kind of knowledge, but a little consideration will make this clear. In passing rapidly through a street, for instance, we may see a number of trees, but they leave only a faint impression, so that if anybody asks us if we noticed a particular tree, we cannot definitely say that we have. We have seen it, but have not been aware of it, so the distinction is justified.

(To be continued)

(For the information contained in this article and the next, I am indebted to the Marathi book entitled "Introduction to Indian Logic" by Pandit Raghunath Shastri Kokje).

(Continued from page 42)

revolt. In reprisal, whole villages were massacred and every day hundreds were imprisoned. Among the prisoners in one jail in Lemberg were 200 Greek priests, including the Orthodox Vicar-General. The cruel and hideous tortures inflicted on these unfortunate folk by the most Catholic people in Europe "surpassed the sufferings on Calvary"—to use the words of a Ukrainian bishop.

This same bishop (vide Revyuk's "Atrocities of the Ukraine") endorsed a report on Greek priests who had been flogged, bayoneted, scalded and even driven mad by torments. It seems reasonable, therefore, to believe reports of Ukrainian and White Russian rejoicing circulated after the Russian "invasion" of Eastern Poland.

But the Catholic Church never gives up. Having twice failed to establish itself in Russia, it still had its eyes fixed on the main chance.

Last year the church freely admitted to proselytising among Russian emigres in China. These folk were so poor, said the report, that the Orthodox Church (good, kind Christians!) had ceased to bother with them. But the Catholic Church, always more far-seeing, was carrying on missionary work among them, training teachers to carry on the good work when the Soviet Government should be overthrown.

Just lately we have learnt that President Roosevelt is hopeful of a rapprochement between Moscow and the Vatican in an alignment against the Axis. Previous to this the Rome radio announced that the Pope (canny fellow) was of the opinion that "God would win the war!" Has the Pope decided that the Allies' side is "God's side"?

If the British and Bolsheviks are going to win the war, God and the Pope will be there waiting to welcome them.

To act in obedience to one's convictions demands a rarer form of courage than that shown in obedience to orders.

—Chapman Cohen.

Reason

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CONTENTS.

Dew Drops by Abraham Solomon	..	..	53
Hindu Logic-II by R. D. Karve	..	..	55
Rain Making by V. V. Sohoni	...	..	57
Notes and News	..	..	61
The 12th Annual General Meeting and Reunion of the Rationalist Association of India	..	..	62

DEW DROPS

Religious apologetics on the subject of miracles are hardly ever read by the masses, and so the latter have no idea of the subtilty with which the learned fathers maintain the possibility of miracles in general, while finely balancing a so scientific caution for the reader against crude credulousness! The masses have no inkling that the miracles—raising of the dead to life, miraculous gift of speech in unknown tongues, etc.—which figure so largely in leaflets about the saints and in sermons from the pulpits and which are responsible for all or almost all of the touching faith of the herd, are rarely mentioned in documents which would be admitted to be binding on the Church.

* * * *

In the early days of the Soviet regime in Russia when the orthodox church opposed the Government in order to preserve its landed estates, Soviet Commissars toured the countryside examining the "imperishable bodies" of absentee saints and exposing the mechanism inside Weeping Icons, Bleeding Images, etc. Mysterious indeed are the dispositions of Providence, for He had allowed these false bodies and relics to work miracles and to help to keep the masses in bondage to Church and Tsar for many centuries.

* * * *

No such inspection has yet been encountered by the Roman Catholic Church but the researches of Catholic scientists themselves have found out that many relics and "miraculously preserved" bodies of saints were pious frauds and the

pressure of centuries of such criticism within the body of the Church itself has been responsible for the cancellation of the names of many a saint from the official list of the Church—in spite of the fact that so many astounding miracles had been performed at their shrines by the merits of wood, wax, and animal bones.

* * * *

In our incredulous days astounding miracles have acquired the habit of not happening. No longer do we see signs in the sky or find the dumb speak, the lame walk and the blind see. That great miracles still take place is alleged by some religious bodies, but in regions and under circumstances which present the greatest difficulty for investigation.

The thanksgiving columns of our papers indeed inform us of saintly assistance in the matter of curing pimples and boils and safe delivery of pious women. We are also told that exceptionally pious persons, unaware of the serious reflection they cast on the efficiency of our august postal service inscribe "S. A. G." or "S. H. G." on their letters meaning "St. Anthony Guide" and "Sacred Heart Guide" so that the letters may safely reach their proper destination.

* * * *

We had just penned the above when I walked a catholic friend of ours. "The age of miracles is not past," he declared, "if we wished to investigate we might go to Old Goa for the Exposition, which is to take place between the 6th and the 13th of May, and which takes place only once in 10 years or so, of the miraculously preserved body of St. Francis Xavier."

* * * *

After enquiries we found that the pilgrims have to wait for hours together in a queue several miles long. The body which is well guarded by gendarmes is itself completely covered leaving exposed only a very small face and a very large foot. The devotee has just a few seconds in which to genuflect and kiss the exposed foot, to place his contribution, and then he is whisked away from the scene by the gendarme.

* * * *

It is ridiculous to say that investigation under such circumstances will prove anything. It is needless to say that no ecclesiastical authority will permit a close inspection of the body. You are told that this has been done long ago by competent authorities appointed by the Church and you must rest satisfied with this.

Abraham Solomon.

MESSAGES.

The Lahore Rationalist Society wishes prosperity to the Rationalist Association of India and pays its deep homage to all the men and women who founded and who now lead and support the Rationalist movement in this country. India is still stupid and superstitious and the only way out is through freedom of speech and discussion. The Rationalist Association of India is doing a work of vital importance in maintaining these principles in the face of prejudice, ignorance, and irrational dogmas. The Lahore Rationalist Society assures the Rationalist Association of India that it stands 'all up' for the best and noblest of causes.

—Krishen Dev, Sec. L. R. S., Lahore.

* * * *

We the Rationalists of Panipat wish every success to the 12th Annual Reunion of the members of the Rationalist Association of India and assure them of our full support to the best of causes.

—Prem Nath, Rajinder Singh,
S. Masood-ul-Hasan.—Panipat.

* * * *

Best wishes to members on the occasion of the 12th Annual Reunion. Hope you all have a cheery time at the Radio Club. We will read the proceedings with great interest.

—Lt.-Col. O. B. R. Dickey,
Srinagar, Kashmir.

* * * *

I wish you all a happy reunion on 15th and regret I cannot be present.

—Prof. H. V. Hampton.

HINDU LOGIC-II

By R. D. KARVE

HINDU logicians consider knowledge a property of the soul. When one's senses come into contact with the external world (including oneself) the soul acquires knowledge. Hindu philosophers admit the mind, the soul and the intellect as three distinct entities, though the intellect is sometimes equated to knowledge. The mind is actually considered as an additional organ of sense besides the usual five. Of course the mind by itself cannot gain any knowledge of external objects except with the help of sense organs. But there are other things which the mind can grasp independently. These are pleasure, pain, desire, hatred, awareness and tendency to action. Desire is distinguished from the tendency to action, because one may desire a thing and still if one thinks it immoral to take it, there will be no tendency to act on the desire.

The concept of the soul gives rise to a number of difficulties. The fact that we can usually attend to only one thing at a time shows that our mind is not always active in all directions. If you are looking at a thing without really seeing it, that is being aware of it, the explanation is that your mind is not connected with your eye at that moment. But if we assume that knowledge is a property of the soul, we have to assume that the soul is always connected to the mind, so that as soon as the mind becomes aware of anything, knowledge of it reaches the soul. But the soul is supposed to be all-pervading, so that it must necessarily be connected with the mind all the time, and in that case, sleep will be impossible. To avoid this dilemma, Hindu logicians have imagined a sort of tubular organ, apparently situated near the heart, called "Puritat", in which the mind occasionally resides, and they have decided that no knowledge is possible so long as the mind is in that tube. This imaginary bodily organ may surprise modern anatomists, but it must be admitted that once you accept the soul as the seat of knowledge, the hypothesis of that tubular organ is a logical necessity and is of the same kind as the hypothesis of an

all-pervading ether, to which scientists were obliged to resort for similar reasons. The hypothesis of a tubular organ may seem cruder, but the logical necessity is the same. When such logical necessities arise, they can only mean that there is something fundamentally wrong in the conceptions that lead to them, the soul in one case and the theory of light in the other.

Another assumption made by Hindu logicians is that Yoga is a source of knowledge. I have already discussed this in a previous article. But the orthodox assumption is that when a man practises Yoga, he is able to see things that are very far, or microscopic in size, or hidden in some way, or even when there is no light. Not only that, he is also able to see into the past or the future. A number of writers have seriously discussed the possibility of such knowledge, and though there was a writer named Kumarila-Bhatta who denied the possibility, others have abused him for his want of faith. If instances of such knowledge are required, they quote legendary stories, for instance the story of Sampati (a bird, the son of Garuda) having seen Sita from a distance of 800 miles. Of course it is not very logical to quote the instance of a bird when discussing men, but it must be remembered that Hindus allow a soul to every living being and that that bird may have been human in a former birth!

For inference, Hindu logicians use the syllogism, but their syllogism consists of four statements instead of the three used by European logicians. To take an instance, the stock instance given by Hindu logicians, we know that there is no smoke without fire, so when we see smoke on a mountain, we infer that there is fire there. This is put in syllogistic form as follows:—

1. There is smoke on the mountain ;
2. There is no smoke without fire
(it is a matter of experience
that wherever there is smoke,
there is fire).

3. Smoke which is connected with fire by this relation is on the mountain.
4. Hence there is fire on the mountain.

It will at once be seen that this syllogism differs from the usual syllogism of European logic in having a third premiss, which is considered entirely unnecessary in European logic. Some people consider Indian logic superior in this respect, but there is hardly any reason for doing so, because the third statement is really obvious and is omitted without loss of clarity.

Indian logicians have not followed the classification of syllogisms as in European logic, but they do know that constant relations are not always reversible and one cannot say, for instance, that wherever there is fire there is smoke.

They have also been struck by the usual difficulty of inductive logic, that the truth of a generalised inference from a few instances can hardly be guaranteed, and that however many instances have been observed before generalising, there is always the possibility of exceptions. For instance, everybody believes such propositions as "Men are mortal", which is a generalisation from observed instances, but there is, strictly speaking, no logical proof of it. Indian logicians give two rules to be observed before generalising, viz., (1) that no generalisation should be made from a single instance. At least a few instances should be observed, though it is difficult to say how many. The second rule is that the proposed generalisation should not be contradicted in any known instance. Of course the original difficulty is not solved in this way, because though no contradictory instance may be known to a particular person or even a number of persons, the possibility of such an instance still remains. But that is as far as we can go and we have to accept this defect in inductive logic.

Though as I said, the classification of syllogisms is not made in Indian logic, Hindu logicians have fully explained what kind of inferences are valid and why other kinds are not justified. They have also given instances where logic is not enough

and common sense has also to be used, as for instance in the arithmetical question, "If there are ten birds on a tree and a man shoots one of them, how many will remain?" Arithmetic, which is entirely logical, says nine, but common sense tells us that on hearing the noise, the rest will fly away and none will remain on the tree.

The greatest mistake which Hindu logicians have made is in considering the Vedas as a source of truth and we find many curious reasons given in support of this assumption. One argument is that errors in a book arise from defects in the author (printing was unknown and there were no printer's devils). But the Vedas having no author (some people seriously maintain this), there could be no defects of this kind and therefore there can be no errors in the Vedas. Another point of view is that since the Vedas discuss and give information about things about which man cannot possibly have any knowledge, such as "What happens to man after death?" or "How was the world created?", and so on, they must have been written by an Omniscient God and hence there could be no mistakes in them. These are the arguments of two parties, one of which does not actually mention God, but uses the same arguments to maintain that the Vedas have no author, instead of saying that they were written by God, which would of course be an unauthorised assumption.

If anybody argues for instance that a particular kind of sacrifice is mentioned in the Vedas as leading infallibly to the birth of a son, but we see in practice that people who make that sacrifice do not always get sons, the answer is that the Vedas cannot be wrong, so if a man makes the sacrifice and still does not get a son, that is a proof that the proper procedure was not followed!

(To be continued.)

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RAIN MAKING.*

By V. V. SOHONI.

THE Clerk of the Weather is a long-suffering individual. Not only has he to struggle with the imperfections of his own science, but he has also to face the public. Sometimes he is given too little credit and at others too much. When he promises sunshine or fair weather, people think they should arm themselves with umbrellas and rain-coats. When he forecasts rain, they feel like planning picnics. But when there are devastating floods that wash away bridges and railway lines, or cyclones that damage their crops or orchards, or houses or boats, the same public glare at the meteorologist, as if he were culpable for all that has happened, as if he could have prevented it. Herein comes the question of the control of weather, of which one aspect is rain-making.

Man must have recognised very early indeed, how entirely dependent he is on rainfall for his water supply and his food crops. Any shortage of rainfall would naturally make him feel extremely worried and he would want to do something if he could to ensure the much needed precipitation. His earliest attempts, at control of the weather took the form of magical practices. Many of these prevail even now in various parts of the world and have been described in Sir J. G. Frazer's well-known work "The Golden Bough". Much of the information in this talk of mine is based on a book by W. J. Humpherys on "Rain making and other weather vagaries". Some of these magical practices consist of imitating lightning, thunder, and rain, an example of which has been observed in Estonia. Three men climb up a tree. One strikes fire-brands together knocking off sparks. This is the lightning. The second makes sounds with a metal pot or a drum. That is the thunder. The third sprinkles water which he has carried up. Sprinkling, splashing or drenching as a charm for inducing rainfall prevails in many different localities on the globe. Processions, often of women or girls, are taken round the village. At

each house they are received with a sprinkling or drenching. Such ceremonies have been reported from places as far apart as Australia, Sumatra, Servia, Macedonia, Russia and Africa. Another method of rain-making by magic consists of the mimicking of aquatic birds or animals like ducks or frogs.

The second class of attempts at rain-making pertains to religious ceremonies. Appealing in some way or other to God or the spirits of the dead is a very ancient cult. The basic rituals include some form of supplication or appeal to the sympathy of the spirits, or sometimes even causing them annoyance, so that they may perhaps to get rid of the annoyance, send the much wanted rain. Talismans are used in some places. Mere praying for rain is common among people of different religions. The Christians do it. The Hindus do it. There used to be an ancient form of sacrifice called "Megha Yadnya" which is performed sometimes even at the present day under the threat of a drought, special poojas are performed in temples.

There is an interesting legend about Tansen—a great singer at Akbar's court. He suffered once from some supposedly incurable disease but was ultimately healed by a rain shower produced by the singing of two girls in the Malhara Raga. Even Music maketh the rain.

We now come to the third and comparatively modern innovation in rain-making by the so-called scientific methods of which there are quite a good few types. There had been a long-standing belief that battles produce rainfall either through the carnage that takes place or due to the firing of cannons. If the gruesome stench of the battlefield compels God to cleanse the earth by a downpour, one need have no quarrel about it. But if somebody tries, as many have, to explain the rain as arising from the sweat and blood of soldiers one would have something to say. If ten thousand soldiers, even if they were all sweat and blood, were evaporated and recondensed to give rain, it would only

* A recent talk before the Rotary Club, Poona.

amount to $\frac{1}{2}$ " over a small field of 13 acres. Then, there was the idea that noise may produce condensation. This notion was once so popular in the United States that their Congress sanctioned 9,000 dollars for experiments in 1891. Experiments with dynamite and other methods of producing noise were tried without any success. A third scientific or rather pseudo-scientific method that occasionally finds advocates is the use of chemicals. Zinc in open pots with dilute sulphuric acid, as a rain-making machine was tried in Australia in 1903. The idea was that hydrogen would rise and cause some whirls in the atmosphere which might induce precipitation. Another experiment consisted of forcing an upward convection. This contemplated a large pipe some 1500 ft. high through which air was to be blown at the bottom. Yet another method was the dusting of the sky, so that there might be nuclei available for water to condense on. Actually there is never any dearth of nuclei in the free atmosphere. Charging or discharging the free air, and the sprinkling of clouds with electrified sand have been proposed too. One Mr. Snodgrass from Australia, not the gentleman from the Pickwick Club, proposed some 15 years ago to produce rain by spraying a mixture of salt and fine sand from an aeroplane so that the hygroscopic nuclei might produce condensation. Nature tries this experiment every monsoon in Kathiawar, Sind and Rajputana, yet day after day passes many a time without actual precipitation. Another inspiration of the rain-maker is to cool the free air. Water will condense, cloud will form, rain will fall! So simple. But all these methods have been proved to be simply absurd. The professional rain-makers thrive for a time, only so long as they can dupe their clients.

Let us consider how nature produces rain. Firstly there is the convectional type of rain seen in thundershowers of which there are always plenty all over the world. The second is the orographic type of rain. An air stream is deflected upwards over a large region on account of barriers of hills and mountains, the ascension leading to rain under favourable temperature and moisture conditions. The third type is the cyclonic type. In the field of a depression or a cyclone there is a convergence of two different kinds of air-streams.

Consequently there is a gradual sloping ascent of moist or warm air over cold and dry air. In India, in a monsoon depression travelling over the country, moist air from monsoon sources ascends over the less moist original land air and gives copious widespread and steady precipitation. In all the 3 types there is a large scale ascent of air. No man-made experiments can come anywhere near what happens in these natural processes. I mentioned a little while ago, for instance, the imagination of a rain-maker who says that he could produce rain by cooling the atmosphere, say, by liquid air. Let us see what this would involve. Consider a column of air one mile high and one mile square. Let its temperature be 25°C (77°F) and humidity 90 per cent. Just to saturate it, the temperature would have to be lowered to 23.2° (73.8°F). For separation of moisture as rain the temperature will have to go still lower. Suppose it went down to 21° (70°F). This could release water to cause a rainfall amounting to $\frac{1}{7}$ inch of rain over the square mile. The quantity of water so precipitated would be 3,33,000 c. ft. To cool one cubic mile of air by 4°C (about 7 or 8°F) 10,00,000 lbs. of liquid oxygen would be required. Further the method is wrong in principle. The air if cooled would sink down, and come to rest at a temperature higher than it had; if there were any cloud at the higher level and if it sank to a lower level, not only would it not precipitate water, but on the other hand it would be warmed and would evaporate. Actually to produce an inch of rainfall over a square mile nature raises some millions of tons of air through a height of the same order. Every day 16,000,000 tons of water vapour are evaporated per second, i.e., equivalent to $\frac{1}{10}$ of water layer over the whole surface of earth per day. Also, rain over 10 miles square, such as might occur in a small thunderstorm is equivalent to 232,320,000 c. ft., and would entail energy of more than 36,000,000 H. P. for a week for evaporation or condensation of the quantity of water involved. Without large scale operations such as occur in nature there can be no rainfall of any practical use.

The rain-makers who try to make money by preying upon the feelings of farmers anxiously needing rain for their

crops are no better than witch doctors or astrologers or palmists or quacks who also pocket their fees. Rain-making is a myth. To make rain, one must control atmospheric systems like the depression. The formation of a depression entails the removal elsewhere of something like 190,000,000,000 tons of air. As a professor of meteorology has remarked, these figures afford the appropriate answer to the questions so often asked by our friends. "When shall we be able to control the weather? When can we make rain? When can we stop rains if falling too heavily? When can we disperse clouds? When can we divert a storm so that it may do no harm?" The answer is when we are able to stop a mass of air of 190,000,000,000, tons from going on its own way.

IS RUSSIA'S COURAGE GOD-GIVEN?

To

The Editor, Reason.

Sir,

It would be interesting to know whether the Godfearing Padres think God is on the side of Russia and that is the secret of Russia's (the only European Power's) successes against Germany?

We have not heard of any National Day of Prayer or special services to the Almighty in Russia, yet they seem to be doing quite well without them!

We were also told the Russian system was a soul-destroying system and what have you, yet of all the peoples of Europe, the Russians are the only people to give the Bosches what for!

And to finish off everything we had the hook-nosed "middleman between Man and God," the one and only Archbishop of Canterbury offer the Almighty a prayer on behalf of "our Gallant Russian Allies" yet in the beginning, cant and humbug made the B.B.C. give up the playing of the Allies' National Anthems as they would have to play the Russian International!!

There is a limit to which "civilian" hypocrisy can rise to, but this "clerical" hypocrisy really has no limits!

"SATAN".

ASTROLOGY

(Pros & Cons).

Arguments against.

(1) *Incompatibility with a Free Human Will*—For instance, to say that the stars of the king of a country or of that country, indicate the death of the King (as of Sawai Madhavrao Peshva in 1795) or the loss of independence of that country (as of Maharashtra in 1818), is to assert that human will is so impotent that a prophecy of this kind, made many years in advance, will not enable the friends of that King to save his life, or the people of that country to preserve their independence.

(2) *Incompatibility with the idea of an almighty & merciful God.*

If earthquakes, volcanic outbursts and deluges are bound to happen under certain aspects of the heavens, it means that the sins which deserve this punishment are bound to be committed by men and that God who is regarded as almighty, omniscient and merciful has not the power or grace to prevent either the commission of sins by men or their punishment.

(3) *No evidence regarding correlation between aspects of the heavens & mundane events is available).*

Conjoined twins whose births are necessarily simultaneous and therefore whose horoscopes are necessarily identical, are found to have different careers. There are innumerable other instances showing the same truth.

Also there is no inductive proof that similar aspects of the heavens are marked by similar events (whether political or meteorological). Advocates of astrology are challenged to adduce such proof.

(4) *The following defects in the current systems throw doubt on the validity of all astrological prophecies)*

(a) Instead of all the heavenly bodies, only a few are taken into consideration in the current systems.

(b) There are fundamental differences of opinion on every step in casting and interpreting horoscopes, as mentioned below:—

1. Birth time—(1) whether the conception time, (2) the time when "breaking of waters" occurs, (3)

time of appearance of the head of the child or (4) its complete coming out and its first cry is to be regarded as the basic time determining the child's future.

2. Which of the 3 or 4 systems of अयनांश is the true one?

3. Which of the six methods of House Division is the correct one?

4. Whether the cusps are the midpoints or boundaries of the 'House'?

5. Which method of interpretation of aspects (इष्टि)—the Western or the Indian—is the true one?

These differences produce $4 \times 3 \times 6 \times 2 \times 2 = 288$ combinations! Which of these is the correct one?

Do heavenly bodies influence human affairs?

Life on this earth is dependent 95 p.c. at least on the sun, and about 4 or 5 p. c. on the moon. Planets and stars exercise physical influence to a minute degree, but there is no evidence that they influence human affairs to any appreciable extent. If that were the case, we would have found that sexual appetite and times of conception vary according to the position of Venus, being least when Venus is 'combust' i.e., in conjunction with the Sun. In the absence of any evidence of this kind, even granting that other heavenly bodies influence the fate of all entities on earth, the difficulties in the way of calculating the exact situations of various heavenly bodies in the horoscope and interpreting their exact influence as mentioned above are so immense, that until these and other disputed points are settled, no astrological predictions can be regarded as other than spurious.

Changing environment renders recurrence of same events concurrently with the recurrence of same aspects impossible.

On account of the regular movements of heavenly bodies, certain aspects of heavens or certain combinations of planets occur (sometimes more than once) in the lives of men in every generation; while we know that the social, economic, educational and political condition of men and also things like age of marriage, opportunities for travel, differ from age to age according to the amount of civilization then existing. Hence it is impossible that aspects should continue to have the same meaning—for instance, aspects of planets

which indicated marriage, its consummation, widowhood before 16 years of age or illiteracy to many a Brahmin girl in former times cannot do so now; nor can those aspects which showed royalty or nobility to a Russian fifty years back, do so now in Soviet Russia.

This shows that aspects of planets cannot be expected to catch up with events in an ever-changing environment.

Hence the unreliability of astrology is plain enough.

Arguments in favour of astrology.

Truly speaking, there are no valid arguments to show that astrological factors give any definite knowledge of future events. However, an apparently valid argument that is brought forward in support of the claims of astrology is that it works in practice in the way of prophecies. This is not true, and anyone who wants to maintain this is requested to demonstrate by means of actual predictions that a certain law in astrology gives correct results far in excess of those due to chance.

Another argument that is adduced in support is that some astrological predictions come wonderfully true. This is, however, a fallacious argument, as, isolated instances, in the absence of any inductive proof, prove nothing. Upto now there have been innumerable systems of divination like the several mancies, Necromancy, Carto-mancy, Geomancy, etc., and also palmistry, reading tea leaves, interpreting dreams, etc., each with a vogue of hundreds of years and believed in by some civilized persons even to-day. Are they all true? If they are not, how is the fact that the people who followed them found that many of the answers proved to be wonderfully correct, to be accounted for? Does not the same explanation apply to the success of astrological predictions, so long as the rule underlying them has not been proved to be valid according to the inductive method?

The fallacy of judging only from favourable instances and not taking into consideration unfavourable ones is a well known source of false beliefs, and hence the so called proof consisting of actual experiences has no value whatsoever.

Will advocates of astrology answer these objections?

R. J. Gokhale.

NOTES AND NEWS

During the three months up to 31st March the R. A. I. has secured nearly 25 new members. It has been decided to extend the offer announced on the 2nd cover page by another month up to the 30th of April. We hope those of our readers who have not yet taken advantage of it will do so without delay. We also request our members to help us in getting new members.

At the present moment the national and international situation is occupying the attention of everyone. These are indeed eventful days but the efforts for the cause of scientific enlightenment and cultural progress must go on and in fact must be intensified. Rationalists must and do realize this as can be seen from consistent help the R. A. I. is receiving in these troublous days. This is a source of encouragement to us and we are grateful to our friends and sympathisers for the same.

It is indeed a matter of surprise for us that the R. A. I. is able to make definite progress in spite of the distraction and tension caused by the war and political agitation. We only wish we can get more young and enthusiastic men who will work for the spread of a scientific temper and rationalist outlook which is so necessary in this period of crisis. We can only hope the needs of the present situation will throw up the right men to lead India to freedom and the prosperity of its people.

But far from stimulating action the present situation has quite the reverse effect on certain people. Like penguins they get paralysed in face of danger. Instead of straining every nerve to strengthen the forces of progress they merely wait for something to happen and by their very inaction effectively sabotage the cause of freedom and strengthen the forces of reaction. If India is to attain freedom and to maintain it, every sphere of life in this country must be rid of communalists and irrationalists. To achieve this all the progressive men and women of this country must unite and make a determined effort

to see that men who exploit human ignorance and religious prejudices for their own ends do not attain positions of power. The actions of our leaders and not their professions must be the criterion of our support.

It is worthy of note that this Easter the usual dose of religious claptrap did not appear in the *Times of India* on Good Friday. Has the *The Times of India* changed its mind about the intelligence of its readers or is it just shortage of paper? If the latter then even shortage of paper can serve some useful purpose. In this case it has prevented a great deal of nonsense from appearing in print.

We gratefully acknowledge the following :—

V. D. Satghare, Rs. 5 ; Homi N. Chinoy, Rs. 5 ; Dr. S. B. Gadgil, Rs. 5 ; D. S. Tanavde, Poona, Rs. 5 ; A. Rahim Beg Mirza, Rs. 5 ; H. V. Hampton, Rs. 5 ; Dr. Geo. Coelho, Rs. 5 ; R. S. Iyenger, Rs. 5 ; A. Raptakos, Rs. 5 ; Dr. Simon Hari, Rs. 5 ; J. R. Labelle, Rs. 5.

New Members.

B. V. Jadhav, Rs. 5 ; Gopinath, Lahore, Rs. 5 ; K. Md. Yakub, Erode, South India, Rs. 5 ; "Iconoclast" Rs. 5 ; I. N. Chib, Panipat, Rs. 5 ; T. V. Logaiyan, Rs. 5 ; P. K. Ray, Rs. 5.

Donations to Reserve Fund.

S. B. Gadgil, Rs. 5.

Donations to General Fund.

Homi N. Chinoy, Rs. 5 ; Dr. S. B. Gadgil, Rs. 5 ; D. S. Tanavde, Poona, Rs. 5 ; H. V. Hampton, Rs. 20 ; Dr. Simon Hari, Rs. 5 ; R. K. Jhaveri, Rs. 3.

Subscriptions to Reason.

Ratankumar, Rs. 2-8 ; Duvur B. R. Reddi, Rs. 2-8 ; Krishna Hari Sexera, Rs. 2-8 ; M. V. Kayarkar, Rs. 2-8.

Reason Sustentation Fund.

Dr. Geo. Coelho, Rs. 20 ; J. R. Labelle, Rs. 15.

D'Avoine Souvenir Fund.

Previous Collection Rs. 50 ; Dr. Geo. Coelho, Rs. 8 ; Dr. W. N. Welinker, Rs. 5 ; Dr. S. Gadgil, Rs. 5 ; Dr. A. M. Zawawi, Rs. 5 ; Total, Rs. 73.

THE 12th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND REUNION OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

THE 12th Annual General Meeting and Reunion of the Rationalist Association of India was held on Sunday 15th March 1942 at the Radio Club, Bombay. Mr. M. R. A. Baig, Sheriff of Bombay, was the guest of honour. Among those present were :— Dr. A. S. Erulkar, Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, Prof. R. D. Karve, Dr. S. K. Muranjan, Rao Bahadur Dr. D. L. Sahasrabudhe, Mr. V. D. Satghare, Dr. S. B. Gadgil, Mr. N. M. Bhathena, Dr. M. G. Pradhan, Mr. J. Ezekiel, Dr. Simon Hari, Mr. Shaik Ahamed, Mr. B. P. Paradkar, Mr. Zakaria Wally Ahamed, Dr. A. M. Zawawi, Mr. E. Benjamin, Dr. A. Mendonza, Mr. Homi N. Chinoy, Dr. George Coelho, Mr. R. S. Iyengar, Mr. and Mrs. R. G. Mahomed, Dr. H. P. Mulgaonkar, Mr. B. Premchand, Miss Margaret Benjamin, Dr. W. N. Welinker, Mrs. P. Benjamin, Mr. A. Husein and others.

GENERAL MEETING.

The General Meeting was held at 12 noon. Dr. A. S. Erulkar presided.

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 16th March 1941 were read, confirmed and argued by him.

The Audited Statement of Accounts for the year 1941 was read and adopted.

In presenting the Statement of Accounts Mr. D. R. D. Wadia said, "In spite of the all round increase in expenditure the financial position of the Association is much better than it has been in the past. The year ended with a surplus of Rs. 197-14-6 as against only Rs. 60-2-0 last year, in addition to the improvement in the other funds of the Association details regarding which are embodied in the Annual Report for the year.

In December 1941 a few members of the R. A. I. decided to raise a Special Fund of Rs.800 and to place it at the disposal of Mr. Abraham Solomon to be utilised during 1942 according to a programme drawn up by him to improve the position

of the R. A. I. and also to make arrangements for coping with the increasing clerical and other work of the Association.

On behalf of the Executive Committee I thank all those who have so generously donated towards the various funds of the Association and particularly to the Reason Sustentation Fund and thus enabled the R. A. I. to publish "Reason" regularly and carry on its other activities.

The Annual Report for the year 1941 was read and adopted.

The following resolution on the formation of Rationalist Societies was moved by Mr. Abraham Solomon on behalf of the Executive Committee.

"To form Rationalist Societies in different parts of India which would carry on activities for the spread of Rationalism."

It was also decided that—

1. The Societies should be affiliated to the R. A. I. and be responsible to the same. Affiliation fee Rs. 5 per annum.
2. The Executive Committee of each society to consist of a president, a treasurer, a secretary and two members.
3. The Secretary of each Society must be a member of the R.A.I.
4. Each Society is free to fix its own rates of subscription.
5. The Executive Committee of these Societies to submit a report of their activities to the Executive Committee of the R. A. I. from time to time and at least once every three months.
6. These Societies would receive Reason and any other literature decided upon by the Executive Committee of the R. A. I. and all other possible help.

The Executive Committee was empowered to take necessary steps to implement the above resolution and asked to see that the activities of these Societies were in keeping with the policy of the R. A. I.

After a little discussion and some questions which were answered by Mr. Solomon the resolution was unanimously passed.

The following office-bearers were elected for the year 1942 :—

President :—Dr. A. S. Erulkar.

Vice-Presidents :—Dr. C. L. D'Avoine and Prof. R. D. Karve.

Hon. Treasurer :—Mr. D. R. D. Wadia.

Jt. Hon. Secretaries :—Mr. Abraham Solomon and Mr. A. Husein.

Members of the Executive Committee :—

Dr. S. B. Gadgil, Dr. M. G. Pradhan, Mr. Y. D. Satghare, M. J. R. Labelle, Mr. Rufus Hari, Mr. Eugene D'Avoine, Dr. S. Hari, Mr. S. B. Rath.

The meeting terminated with a vote of thanks to the chair.

* * * * *

THE REUNION LUNCHEON

The Members and guests numbering about sixty then sat for lunch in an atmosphere from which all rigid formality was conspicuously absent. Dr. A. S. Erulkar presided.

Dr. A. S. Erulkar.

Speaking after Lunch Dr. Erulkar said :
Ladies and gentlemen, I have two very pleasant duties to perform, one is to introduce Mr. and Mrs. Baig, who are our guests this afternoon, and the other is to present a souvenir to Dr. C. L. D'Avoine as an humble token of our appreciation of his services to the cause of Rationalism. Mr. Baig, who is the Sheriff of our town, is not a stranger to us and we are all glad that both he and Mrs. Baig have honoured us by their presence.

Before I present this little souvenir to Dr. D'Avoine, I request Mr. Abraham Solomon to say a few words in connection with the activities of Dr. D'Avoine.

Mr. Abraham Solomon.

Ladies and Gentlemen : Some months back a few members of the Rationalist Association of India and friends of Dr. D'Avoine gave a party to him on the 4th of December last, his 66th birthday, in order to show our appreciation of his services to the cause of Rationalism and the R. A. I. There it was decided to publish the "Reason Case" in booklet form and to present a copy attractively bound, at the occasion of the 12th Annual Reunion of the R. A. I. We are doing so to-day. I need not go into details about the activities of Dr. D'Avoine as you all are aware of them. This little souvenir which we are presenting is entitled "In Defence of Free Expression". Although few are aware or are ready to acknowledge it, the "Reason Case" is a landmark in the history of Indian journalism. It vindicated the right of every man and woman to the free expression of his or her honest opinions. Had we not won this case, I am afraid, we would not to-day be meeting here for the 12th Annual Reunion of our Association. We can raise no monuments to Dr. D'Avoine, but we know that the best monuments one can have are one's own actions ; actions which are directed towards the well-being and progress of humanity. On behalf of you all and the Rationalist Association of India, I wish Dr. D'Avoine a long, healthy and prosperous life.

Mr. D. R. D. Wadia then said a few words regarding the activities and progress of the R. A. I.

Dr. Erulkar then presented the Souvenir to Dr. D'Avoine. It was printed on art paper with a portrait of Dr. D'Avoine and bound in blue silk, on which the words "In Defence of Free Expression." were embossed in silver. The Souvenir bore the signature of Dr. A. S. Erulkar, Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, Prof. H. V. Hampton, Dr. George Coelho, Mr. R. D. Karve, Dr. S. K. Muranjan, Dr. M. G. Pradhan, Dr. W. N. Welinker, and others.

Dr. C. L. D'Avoine.

Ladies and Gentlemen : I thank you very much for this beautiful gift. I am indeed overwhelmed by your kindness and appreciation of my humble efforts for the cause of Rationalism. Mr. Solomon

is right when he says that had we not won the Reason Case we would not have been able to meet here this afternoon under the auspices of the R. A. I. This case also showed the extent to which fanaticism and bigotry are entrenched in this country.

I shall always prize this souvenir which you have given me and continue to do all I can for the cause of Rationalism which we all hold so dear. (Applause).

Dr. Erulkar then requested Mr. M. R. A. Baig to say a few words.

Mr. M. R. A. Baig.

Mr. President, Ladies & Gentlemen :

Long experience in the Rotary Club has taught me that nothing is more irrational than speaking after meals. I am, therefore, somewhat surprised to find the Rationalist Association indulging in such unhealthy practices.

However, I am grateful for having this opportunity of thanking you, Sir, for the nice things you have said about me and the Members of the Association for inviting my wife and myself as your guests at this function.

Rationalism, these days, is a rare thing to find, and where the light of reason is concerned, the world is experiencing a total black-out. For our own country Rationalism is too abstract to catch the imagination of the public, and I would suggest that you put forward something more concrete that would do this. For instance, pointing out the flaws in dogmatic religions without substituting something else tends to strengthen rather than weaken the religions. The Church is actually proud of the fact that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.

In India we have something much worse than dogmatic religions, for we have that situation that is known as Communalism. Those of us who are rationalists know the defects in dogmatic religions ; those of us who are politicians know the evils of politics, and those of us who are social workers are fully aware of the rottenness of the social system. Communalism embraces all the three. It has the vices of all and the virtues of none.

I suggest that the Rationalist Association consider the task of eradicating communalism ; just attacking it will do little good, and we must substitute something else, and the only substitute for communalism is of course nationalism.

But do not think for a moment that I am advocating narrow nationalism of the type that has brought on this war ; in fact I am inclined to agree with the wag who defined a Nation as a group of people who share a common myth about their ancestors and a common aversion of their neighbours. Nationalism certainly cannot stand the test of reason but it is obvious that according to Indian conditions nationalism is the first step towards any form of inter-nationalism or rationalism. What I have suggested sounds a paradox but it is a rational means to a rational end.

To feel nationally we must commence thinking nationally. Some weeks ago, I put forward a slogan "Think Indian". This, I am glad to say, seems to have been well received and favourably commented on in the Press. May I as a proud father suggest that you adopt this as the motto of the Rationalist Association. If we think Indian we will be Indian and by helping to make Hindus, Muslims, Parsees, Christians and goodness knows what, into Indians, the Rationalist Association will have served a great rationalist purpose. (Applause).

Dr. A. S. Erulkar.

Ladies and Gentlemen : On behalf of you all I thank Mr. Baig for his interesting speech. I agree with him in what he has said. Mr. Baig is the Sheriff of our town and he is a rationalist. I think that is why we hear something rational coming from the mouth of a sheriff. That strengthens my rationalist convictions. Before I sit down I would like to say a few words about the war. We are all concerned about the war and there are one or two conclusions which we can draw from it, which, in fact, we cannot help drawing. Many of us switch on to London at about 8 o'clock—I always do, I have my two children in England, and am naturally anxious. I know it is London when I get it, for, if one is a few minutes early a prayer is invariably going on. (Laughter).

To-day we find that the country which is fighting best on our side is a godless country. This has come as a surprise to many; but it was not a surprise to those who were better informed. We have the example of Poland, of France and Italy which have done so badly in this war. I shall not go into this further. (Laughter).

When we turn to India we find so many gods and so many religions. I do not think there is any god or religion that we do not have in this country, and yet it is the worst off. I am interested in psychology, and morbid psychology is also a part of it. I think that the belief in gods has its basis in inferiority complex. A person who is not sure of his own strength will always rely on someone bigger or higher. We have the example of children. When they have a fight and are beaten they always say that their father or someone else would serve the other fellow right or words to that effect, or as a last resort that God would punish him. Wherever we look we see the harm done by religion. We see in India people who have so many things in common divided by religion. I hope all of you will try to strengthen the Rationalist Association of India and spread Rationalism throughout India.

I once again thank Mr. and Mrs. Baig for attending our function this afternoon. (Applause).

Mr. V. D. Satghare, in the course of his speech, made a plea for the spread of Rationalism in this country.

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA.

Annual Report for the year ended 31st December 1941.

The Office-bearers for the year under review were :—

President :—Dr. A. S. Erulkar,

Vice-Presidents :—Dr. C. L. D'Avoine and Mr. R. B. Lotwalla,

Hon. Treasurer :—Mr. D. R. D. Wadia,

Jt. Hon. Secretaries :—Mr. Abraham Solomon and Mr. A. Husein,

Members of the Executive Committee :—Prof. R. D. Karve, Prof. S. K. Muranjan, Dr. S. B. Gadgil, Mr. J. N. Patuck, Dr. S. Hari, Mr. A. R. Desai, Mr. S. B. Rath.

In August Mr. A. Husein resigned from the Jt. Hon. Secretaryship as he left Bombay for Singapore and Mr. R. Hari was appointed acting Secretary in his place. Prof. S. K. Muranjan left Bombay for Dharwar and Dr. M. G. Pradhan was co-opted in his place.

Membership : The year started with 1 patron, 9 life members, and 77 ordinary members. During the year 2 life members and one ordinary member died. Three members did not renew their subscription. One member became a life member, and 31 new members joined the Association.

The year ended with 1 patron, 8 life members, and 103 ordinary members.

Reason : Reason was published regularly throughout the year. In addition to members and subscribers it was sent to more than 40 important libraries all over India. The first four issues were printed at the nominal cost of Rs. 15 per issue by Mr. R. B. Lotwalla at the Advocate of India Press. From June 1941, it was printed at the British India Press, the full cost of publication being borne by the Association. In order to meet the cost of publication a "Reason Sustentation Fund" was started, and Rs. 580 was collected, out of which only Rs. 280 was utilised.

Funds : The year started with a Reserve Fund of Rs. 700-5-8, Lecture Fund Rs. 23, and Balance Rs. 60-2-0. During the year Rs. 201 was received towards the Reserve Fund, Rs. 580 towards the Reason Sustentation Fund, Rs. 60 towards the General Fund and Rs. 2 towards the Lecture Fund. Rs. 100 received as life-membership was credited to the Reserve Fund. The whole of the General Fund of Rs. 60 was utilised for general purposes. Out of the Reason Sustentation Fund Rs. 280 was utilised.

In December 1941, a few members of the Association decided to raise a Special Fund of Rs. 800 to be placed at the disposal

of Mr. Abraham Solomon to be utilised during 1942 according to a programme drawn up by him to improve the position of the R. A. I. and put it on a more secure basis, and also to make arrangements for coping with the increasing work of the Association.

On 31st December 1941, the Funds stood as follows :—

Reserve Fund Rs. 1001-5-8 ;
Reason Sustentation Fund Rs. 300 ;
Lecture Fund Rs. 25 ; Special
Fund for 1942 Rs. 250 ; and Balance
Rs. 197-14-6.

Total Rs. 522-14-6 exclusive of Reserve Fund and the Special Fund for 1942.

It will be noted that in spite of the increase in expenditure and other difficulties, the Association has, to a certain extent, improved its position financially. The Executive Committee thanks all those who have so generously donated to the funds of the Association and enabled it to carry on in spite of the many difficulties it had to face.

Activities : The book 'Rama Rajya' by Mr. S. D. Nadkarni was published. The cost of publication was met by the author. The book was favourably reviewed in all the papers in which a review appeared except the *Hindu* of Madras which wrote ; "One should wonder what the laws of the land are for, if not to prevent the circulation of such blasphemous stuff in print." This remark ought to serve as a reminder to all rationalists as to the extent to which fanaticism exists in this country.

During the year, in spite of the increase in the price of books there was a greater demand for rationalist literature than could be met due to the difficulties in getting the same. Books worth Rs. 153-8-0 were sold, most of them being publications of the Rationalist Press Association of London.

The *Crux of the Indian Problem* by Sir Raghunath P. Paranjpye, the booklet *Four Pastors and An Unbeliever* and the pamphlet *What is Religion?* by Ingersoll were given free to new members.

The following lectures were delivered :—
2nd January, Mr. Abraham Solomon on "Belief in Reason" at the Cosmo Circle, Bandra. 26th January, Prof. R. D. Karve, on "Rationalism and the New World Order" at the Cosmo Circle, Bandra. 24th February, Prof. R. D. Karve on "What is Rationalism?" Rationalist Club, Santa Cruz. 9th March, Prof. R. D. Karve, on "Rationalism" in Marathi, at Dhuru Hall, Dadar, Bombay, organised by Sarvajanic Vidyalaya. 2nd November, Prof. R. D. Karve, on "Rationalism" in Marathi at the Pathare Kshatriya Vakritwottekak Samaj, Gamdevi, Bombay. 17th December, Mr. K. T. Chandy on "Law and Society".

We are thankful to Mr. J. M. Cooper for allowing the Association the free use of his Philatelic Hall at Standard Building, Hornby Road, Fort, Bombay, and Mr. R. B. Lotwalla for the free use of the Indian Institute of Sociology Library, Girgaon, Bombay.

With the help of Dr. Prem Nath of Panipat and Mr. Krishna Dev of Lahore, two Rationalist Groups have been formed, namely the Panipat Rationalist Society and the Lahore Rationalist Society which are carrying on activities in their respective areas, as a result of which many new members have been secured for the R. A. I. from those areas. Efforts are being made to form rationalist groups in other parts of India as well.

The R. A. I. was represented at the All India Students' Anti-Fascist Conference held at Delhi on 15th and 16th November by Dr. Prem Nath, our representative for Northern India.

The Executive Committee takes this opportunity of thanking all the members for the support and help they have given to the R. A. I. in its efforts for the cause of rationalism in this country.

Bombay,
15th March 1942.

Abraham Solomon,
Rufus Hari,
Jt. Hon. Secretaries.

LIST OF DONATIONS

Reserve Fund.

		Rs. a. p.
1938.	Dr. G. V. Deshmukh. ...	100-0-0
	Dr. A. S. Erulkar. ...	100-0-0
	Mr. D. R. D. Wadia ...	100-0-0
	Mr. J. M. Cooper ...	50-0-0
	Lt.-Col. K. C. Sanjana. ...	25-0-0
1939.	Prof. H. V. Hampton. ...	10-0-0
	Mr. J. R. Labelle. ...	5-0-0
	"Heaven" ...	13-5-8
	"Nur Jehan Azad" ...	5-0-0
	A Sympathiser... ...	5-0-0
	Lt-Col : O. B. R. Dickey. ...	15-0-0
	Mrs. M. F. M. Phelps. ...	27-0-0
1940.	Mr. N. M. Bhathena. ...	35-0-0
	Lt-Col : K. C. Sanjana. ...	10-0-0

Life-Memberships :—

	Lt-Col : K. C. Sanjana. ...	100-0-0
	N. M. Bhathena. ...	100-0-0
1941.	Mr. A. S. Tyebjee. ...	100-0-0
	Prof. H. V. Hampton. ...	45-0-0
	Lt-Col : O. B. R. Dickey ...	5-0-0
	Mr. J. N. Patuck: ...	5-0-0
	Prof. D. K. Karve. ...	5-0-0
	Mr. J. F. Vapiwala. ...	2-0-0
	Mr. Mangalore P. Pai. ...	10-0-0
	Mr. Kishen Dev. ...	7-0-0
	Dr. A. C. Ukil. ...	5-0-0
	Dr. H. P. Moolgaokar. ...	5-0-0
	Lt-Col : K. G. Gharpurey.	5-0-0
	Major R. M. Lloyd-Still. ...	5-0-0
	Mr. Bhagat Ram. ...	2-0-0

Life-Membership :

Mr. C. Deb Banerji. ...	100-0-0
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Rs. 1,001-5-8

"Reason" Sustentation Fund.

		Rs. a. p.
1.	Mr. D. R. D. Wadia. ...	60-0-0
2.	Mr. N. M. Bhathena. ...	60-0-0
3.	Mr. R. B. Lotwalla. ...	60-0-0
4.	Mr. J. R. Labelle. ...	55-0-0
5.	Mr. P. M. Wagle. ...	50-0-0
6.	Mr. J. N. Patuck. ...	50-0-0
7.	Mr. J. M. Cooper ...	50-0-0
8.	Dr. C. L. D'Avoine. ...	45-0-0
9.	Rao Bhadur Dr. D. L. Sahasra- buddhe. ...	30-0-0
10.	Prof. S. K. Muranjan. ...	25-0-0
11.	Dr. A. S. Erulkar. ...	20-0-0
12.	Mr. J. B. H. Wadia. ...	20-0-0
13.	Dr. Geo. Coelho. ...	20-0-0
14.	The Hon'ble Mr. Justice K. C. Sen. ...	10-0-0
15.	Dr. D. D. Karve. ...	10-0-0
16.	Mr. V. S. Mudvedkar. ...	10-0-0
17.	Mr. Joseph I Samson. ...	5-0-0

Rs. 580-0-0

General Fund.

Dr. S. B. Gadgil. ...	10-0-0
Dr. S. Hari. ...	10-0-0
Mr. D. S. Tanavde. ...	5-0-0
Mr. Kishore Premchand. ...	5-0-0
Mr. Homi N. Chinoy.	5-0-0
Lt-Col : O. B. R. Dickey. ...	5-0-0
Mr. Ardeshir K. Irani. ...	5-0-0
Mr. J. N. Patuck. ...	5-0-0
Rao Bahadur Dr. D. L. Sahasra- buddhe. ...	5-0-0
Mr. Sohrab A. Kalyanwala. ...	5-0-0

Rs. 60-0-0

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

Receipts and Payments Account for the Year ended 31st December 1941

RECEIPTS.				PAYMENTS.			
		Rs.	a. p.	Rs.	a. p.	Rs.	a. p.
To Opening Balance :—				By Printing of "Reason"	483	12	0
Reserve Fund	700	5	8	Miscellaneous Printing	75	8	0
General Fund	60	2	0	Stationery, etc.	36	4	0
Deposit reg. "Rama Rajya"	200	0	0	Printing of "Rama Rajya"	368	0	0
" with Blavatsky Lodge	25	0	0	Expenses on a/c of Mr. S. D. Nadkarni	10	7	0
Cash in hand	Rs. 0	4	0	Remuneration to Typist	50	0	0
Uncashed Postal Order	2	8	0	Wages to Cycle Peon	40	0	0
			988	Postage	113	14	9
			3	Annual Dinner	164	0	0
Ordinary Membership Subscription	449	14	0	Purchase of Books	121	8	0
" " Arrears.	35	0	0	Advertisement Charges	6	6	0
" " Advance (for 1942)	60	0	0	Tea-Party Expenses	16	9	9
			544	Bank Charges	2	7	0
			14				1,488
			0				12
							6
Life Membership			100	Closing Balances :—			
Subscription to "Reason"	59	8	0	Lecture Fund—Deposit with Blavatsky Lodge			25
" " " (1942)	7	8	0	Reserve Fund	1,001	5	8
			67	"Reason" Sustentation Fund	300	0	0
			0	Special Fund for 1942	250	0	0
Subscription to Annual Dinner			137	Surplus of contribution reg. "Rama Rajya"			
Donations :—			0	(S. D. Nadkarni a/c)	33	1	0
Reserve Fund	201	0	0				
General	60	0	0	General Balances :—			
"Reason" Sustentation Fund	580	0	0	Bank	113	9	6
Lecture Fund	2	0	0				1,698
Special Fund for 1942	250	0	0				0
			1,093				2
			0	Cash in hand	81	7	0
Sale of Literature			153	Postage	2	14	0
Contribution re : Publication of "Rama Rajya"			212				84
			8				5
			3,296				0
			1				8
			8				

(Sd.) ABRAHAM SOLOMON

(Sd.) RUFUS HARI (Ag.)

Jt. Hony. Secretaries.

(Sd.) D. R. D. WADIA,

Hon. Treasurer.

Examined and Found Correct.

(Sd.) CORNELIAS & DAVAR,

Incorporated Accountants and Auditors.

The world is my country, to do
good is my religion.

—Thomas Paine.

Reason

Vol. X

MAY 1942

No. 5

The Journal of The Rationalist Association of India
41, Queen's Road,
Bombay, 2.
(Estd. 1931)

Editor :

Prof. R. D. Karve, M.A.
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris).

Asstt. Editor :

Abraham Solomon.

The writers of the articles in this journal are themselves responsible for the views expressed and do not implicate the Rationalist Association of India in any way.

We invite contributions of not more than 1,500 words on topics of interest to rationalists. They should be typewritten. If not published they will not be returned unless stamps are enclosed. Matter for publication should reach the Editor on or before the 23rd.

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CONTENTS.

Dew Drops by Abraham Solomon	..	69
Hindu Logic-III by R. D. Karve..	..	71
Notes and News	..	72
Sex-Frustrated India by Atib Usmani	..	73
Catholic Truth about Francis Xavier by 'Savonarola'	..	77
What then are we to do? by Prem Nath	..	79
Sense and Finance by V. S. Mudvedkar	..	82
Sidelights on Life by R. B. Nagrimule	..	83

DEW DROPS

In the issue dated 2nd May of the Catholic Examiner, there is an article entitled "I worshipped the Cow" by one J. Stephen Narayan, who imagines he has found out some points of superiority in Roman Catholicism to his native Hinduism. Without holding any brief for Hinduism we must point out to Mr. Narayan that Catholic superstitions are no whit inferior to the Hindu variety. Thus we do not see why touching the dewlap of the cow is more absurd than kissing the bishop's ring or the Pope's toe. If some Hindus consider it "a sacrilege to pass round a cow counter-clockwise" the Catholics consider it less binding to make the sign of the Cross in the North,-South,-East-West and not the N.-S.-W.-E. fashion.

* * * * *

The bull-god in a Trichur temple "is supposed to be asleep and the worshippers, Mr. Narayan declares, have to clap their hands twice or thrice to wake him up before they address their prayers to the bull." Mr. Narayan is perhaps not aware of the popular superstition among Catholics in India and elsewhere which supposes that God is asleep if prayers are not answered and requires the applicant to persist in prayer till God grants the request out of weariness and disgust. It may also interest Mr. Narayan to know that when the nuns in a Poona convent wanted a second car (they were so poor they had only one) they bound the image of their patron saint and tied a toy car around his neck. The rich visitors to the convent were naturally explained the reason for this outrage to the dignity of the poor saint and as a result of these rather delicate hints a car did, in due course, arrive.

CRUEL NEGLECT OF CHILDREN BORN IN A MAL-ADJUSTED HOME

Even in this age of great advancement there are to be found such homes here and there where girls are undesirable. There seems to be a prevalent belief among a section of our people that there should be no such concern about the care of girls. "Mother Nature takes sufficient care of them". So in many cases, they are often left to themselves for hours in wet and dirty clothing, and are allowed to wear clothes that are too small for comfort. It is a paradox to say that whereas the children of the poor classes do often benefit from the out-of-doors, those of the orthodox middle classes are very often kept behind closed doors. These children suffer much in a home where they are undesirable, in a home where the unscrupulous father was inclined to take advantage of the one-sidedness of his personal law, and where between the father and the mother there was a constant disagreement, or disinterestedness in each other's problems.

The neglect of such children was worse where the dear mother was dead, and especially where the father was planning to marry again even in his much advanced age. Although the heartless father is for one reason or another very particular about giving feasts to the Brahmans, either with a view to purify the house, or to display his opulence; yet he finds little time to give sufficient care to his own almost orphaned little children. Similarly he will often prevent deceased wife's sympathetic relatives from helping to give the needed love and care that the helpless little children deserve and crave for.

What is far worse, is that these children are often the victims of continual threatenings, being continually ruled by fear rather than by love. This is likely to result, when they grow up, in nervous disorders as well as insanity and crime in extreme cases. Responsibility for such crime, therefore, does not solely rest upon the one who commits it, for it is shared by all who have supported or accepted those wrong social conditions which are conducive to it, either by their speech or silence. One of the greatest needs of these children in life is a

feeling of security; some one to love, to have faith in.

It is to enable you to understand the question, to enable you to build up public opinion which will ultimately down this cruelty in every sense and every form, that we strive. Indeed, the cause is a sacred one.

A Sympathiser.

whereupon the pious nuns released the chafing saint and thanked him profusely.

To give another instance, whenever a pious Catholic has mislaid, or is robbed of, some article he possessed, St. Anthony is invoked and then bound with cords till the article is retraced, or the culprit caught.

* * * *

"Ghee", says Mr. Narayan, "is sometimes offered by itself to the gods and the ghee thus offered is believed to have special efficacy in the case of certain diseases I was frequently given ghee that had been offered to Shiva and over which many sacred hymns had been recited." Well, Mr. Narayan will not miss his native element in the Catholic Church. Every time he enters a church he will dab his forehead with Holy water which is just ordinary H₂O transmuted by the alchemy of priestly abracadabra into a compound of devil-exPELLING potency. Very frequently in his life he will find occasion to make use of holy oil, holy ash, holy candles, holy pictures, holy palms, holy medals, holy girdles, holy rosaries, etc., etc. And he may even partake of the 'black gram' which is sold on feast days and supposed to be holy and is usually bought by the Catholic herd and he will no doubt benefit immensely therefrom.

* * * *

With his newly acquired veneer of Christian culture this neophyte shudders at the mere mention of the 'Panchagavya', a mixture of the five products of the cow. But the day he comes to the full knowledge of the five products of the Roman Catholic Church—Mussolini, Hitler, Franco, Laval and von Papen—and the New Order which in some countries surreptitiously and in others with open Catholic approval they seek to foist upon mankind, he will rush back to the five products of the cow as being by far the less disgusting.

Abraham Solomon.

HINDU LOGIC—III

By R. D. KARVE

HINDU logicians include the art of controversy as a part of logic. This has for its object not a search for the truth but the silencing of the opponent. Pandits in former days used to go about holding debates with a view to proving themselves invulnerable and even to tour the country for this purpose. Kings used to have in their service learned pandits who could defeat all comers in debate. These debates usually assumed the truth of the Vedas and apt quotations formed part of the equipment of a good debater. The first Shankaracharya, who saved the Hindu religion from the virulent attacks of its rivals, Jainism and Buddhism, had to defeat their representatives in debate. There is a curious anecdote told about him that in one of these debates, he was asked a question which involved a knowledge of married life, and as he was a celibate, he was nonplussed. He got out of the difficulty by asking for time, which was granted. He (i.e. his soul) then left his own body and entered that of a married man who had just died and who thus revived, to the astonishment of the mourners. Having thus got experience of married life for some years, he returned to his own body which his disciples had carefully guarded, and was then prepared to answer the question.

The kind of argument used in such debates may be seen from the following typical defence of the Jain doctrine of "Ahinsa" (literally, non-killing) :—Ahinsa is a sacred duty. According to the Jain religion, Ahinsa is a duty, because God likes people who do not kill. There is no place in Heaven for people who kill. Opponents may say that those who kill for sacrificial purposes also go to Heaven. But God does not on any account like people who kill. Jain Sadhus do not cook their food for fear that some small insects may be killed in the process. It may be objected that even Jain Sadhus eat food cooked by others, and so share the sin of killing. But if the food is not cooked expressly for the Sadhus, they have no part in the sin. (Similarly Buddhist monks were allowed by Buddha himself to eat even meat if it was not specially cooked for them, and Buddha himself is

said to have died of a surfeit of boar's flesh.) The above argument seems satisfactory to Jains as establishing the proposition that Ahinsa is a sacred duty!

The Hindu idea of logic includes not only what westerners call logic, but also psychology, epistemology (theory of knowledge) and ontology (the science of the nature of things), the last being a part of metaphysics. Since Logic cannot stand by itself without a consideration of these other subjects, Hindu logicians are inclined to consider their system as more comprehensive and hence more perfect. It must be remembered, however, that as knowledge progresses, its division into different subjects is inevitable even if these subjects are not entirely independent. Such division leads to greater clarity of thought and nothing prevents a reference to other subjects where it is required.

Hindu logic does not state in so many words the usual postulates of logic such as the law of contradiction or the law of the excluded middle, but they are implicit in the faults of reasoning which they have enumerated. For instance, when a statement depends on itself for proof, it is not proved. For instance, when it is said that "Independence can only be achieved by Swarajya", nothing is proved, because Swarajya itself means independence. Similarly, when two statements depend on each other, and neither is proved independently, nothing is proved. For instance, "You should not enter water unless you can swim", and "You cannot swim unless you enter water". Another fault is argument in a circle, which is well-known.

Hindu logicians are also acquainted with the "reductio ad absurdum" method of proof, which consists in assuming the opposite of what we want to prove and showing that it leads to an absurdity.

Though Logic is useful to establish the truth, and though the Bhagavad-Gita proclaims that 'there is no religion higher than the Truth', the great, popular law-giver Manu has laid down that though you should certainly speak the truth, it is also desirable

to please, so you should not speak the truth if it is unpleasant, nor should you speak an untruth in order to please. "This", says Manu, "is the Sanatana Dharma" (the eternal religion, i.e. Hinduism)! This is practical advice which will be helpful if one does not want to be unpopular like Socrates, who cared more for the truth than for popularity.

Religion has been the great stumbling block in the way of progress of any kind in India. Indirectly the religious necessity of fixing the time of astronomical occurrences in order to determine auspicious times for certain rites led to the study of astronomy. Later on, came a time when all study was dropped and people relied on tradition for everything. The European calendar has been adjusted from time to time to synchronise with astronomical events. In India, the calendar became fixed because nobody cared to study and make the necessary changes and it has consequently become deplorably out of date. The same has happened to all kinds of scientific research, to such an extent that it has become difficult to believe that there was ever anything like scientific research in India at all. Not only that, orthodox Hindus have acquired an attitude of blind devotion to tradition as against modern knowledge. All they can do is to boast of the achievements of their ancestors, real or imaginary, and ignore the fact that it is all the more disgraceful for them to have no achievements of their own. Because some kind of air-conveyance is mentioned in the *Ramayana*, people argue that aeroplanes were known in those days! There are no reliable records to show anything of the kind, and a poet can easily imagine an air-car even when it does not exist in reality. In fact, that air-car itself was an unnecessary luxury, since several classes of beings are described as having the power to travel by air without any conveyance at all. And it is somewhat surprising to find that it was not Rama, the incarnation of God, who possessed the air-car, but his arch-enemy, Ravana, the Rakshasa, the evil-doer, who possessed it and from whom Rama ultimately got it after killing him. It seems that the enemies of the gods were much more intelligent than the gods themselves! But when one comes to think of it, even in a modern novel or drama, the villain is often much more resourceful than the hero!

NOTES AND NEWS

Over a year ago the Bombay Station of the All India Radio arranged a series of broadcast talks entitled "Four Pastors and an Unbeliever" which were later published in pamphlet form by the R.A.I. We learn that these talks were very much appreciated by listeners. Recently as a result of requests from several listeners for talks of a similar nature, Dr. C. L. D'Avoine was requested to give a talk on "Highbrow Religion." The talk was broadcast on 12th May at 8-30 p.m.

* * * *

Several members and friends have been asking us why we do not arrange for more talks of this nature on Rationalism and cognate subjects. We request our members to write to the A. I. R. instead of to us. The religionists are always on the look out for every opportunity to boost their own point of view to the exclusion of every other. Regular campaigns are carried on to see that nothing of a heretical nature gets into the press or the air. Rationalists must make every effort to counteract this organised campaign by taking every opportunity to write to the papers and the A.I.R. and to put forward the Rationalist point of view. Those in charge of the organs of public information and the A.I.R. must be made aware of the fact that there are thousands of intelligent men and women among their readers and listeners who desire stuff of a more enlightened kind than the religious claptrap that is served out to them. We hope Rationalists all over India will make every effort to see that the Rationalist point of view gets a fair hearing.

* * * *

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THIS SEX-FRUSTRATED INDIA

By **ATIB USMANI**

THE segregation of sexes in India now appears to have reached that stage when it can claim a science and art of its own—the science and art of sexual frustration. Sexual frustration to-day stands as a well-organised institution and is practically recognised as such by the Government. One is bound to find its evidences everywhere one goes. The zenana railway-compartments, the ladies' cinema classes, the purdah clubs, the draped vehicles, the walking shuttle-cocks, and the holy nun-like expressions on our maidens' faces, are but the living symbols of the sexual frustration of this country.

The institution of the sexual frustration takes its origin in the unwholesome mental attitude that sex expression in all forms and in any and every circumstance is essentially degraded and wicked, and must be kept at a minimum at all costs. No pains are spared by the parents and teachers to keep the young generation ignorant of sexological knowledge as completely and as long as possible, and every attempt is made to prevent romantic literature and love pictures from reaching their hands. Small boys and girls are not allowed to play together from their very infancy and their most innocent pranks are looked upon with the greatest alarm by their elders who see sex in everything. Thus by the time they reach the age of puberty they imbibe enough of this obscene mentality to make them hot with shame whenever they happen to face each other. In some backward homes brothers and sisters grow up almost as strangers and cannot speak with each other without experiencing a sense of uneasiness. Even some of the Europeans in India have fallen victims to this mental disease. The sex guilt is always present more or less in everything young or old and cannot be missed by a critical observer.

So long as the children remain children everything goes on well, but as soon as they reach the age of adolescence, the pinch of sexual frustration begins to be felt by them. To remedy their growing sexual

urges, self-torture, fasting, religious meditations, are prescribed to them. Perhaps the greatest function of religion in India is to dull the sting of sexual frustration in youths and maidens of our country. It is a fact that those countries in which society is segregated on the basis of sex are also the most religious countries of the world. And India certainly comes first in this category. It is probably this that is meant by the "spiritual genius of India". Spiritualism is only another way of saying that we are a sexually frustrated people and that we are foolish enough to be noisy about it.

The science of sexual frustration finds its most rigorous application in girls' educational institutions, where it vies with the military science in the employment of strategies, tactics, blinds, and the use of barbed wire, sentry out-posts and fortresses. It has a regular system of espionage and censorship. It has even a fifth column of its own! As an illustration I shall describe here the changes that were brought about in a boys' hostel when it was converted into a hostel for girls. The changes were provocative and diverting at the same time. Within a week of the announcement there arrived an army of bricklayers and up went the low compound walls till the whole of the lower storey and part of the upper storey were hidden from view. A gate within a gate was constructed and fitted with lover-proof steel shutters. A wall was erected on the roadside of the terrace top of the upper storey so that when the damsels of virtue went up to inhale the fresh evening air they would be saved from the unworthy stares of the passers-by on the road below. Even this was not deemed enough and shortly after the damsels had arrived a fence of barbed wire was stretched over the compound wall. But what surprised me most was the appearance of a formidable array of thorny acacia trees which, after a rainy season, had grown sufficiently tall to be visible over the compound wall. That array of acacias is sufficient to damp the scaling tendencies of the most valiant of our modern Romeos!

What goes on within the four walls of these modern harems is not the less remarkable. A lady known as the warden of the hostel is employed to safeguard the morals of the inmates of the hostels. Her apartments are situated nearest to the gate and her living room is provided with a number of windows apparently to maintain a supply of fresh air but in reality to facilitate her observation of every person coming and going through the gate. Chicks are as a rule suspended over the doors and windows of her apartments so that the inside of the rooms remains in comparative darkness. The advantage of this is that while the lady warden can see everybody from inside she cannot be seen by anybody who is outside.

A description of the character of this lady would not be out of place here. She is as a rule a homely, flabby, middle-aged woman with a vulture-like stare in her eyes. She is unmarried and has no children or she may have been divorced some time in the past. She usually holds a university degree and the expulsions of several girls as a result of intercepted love-letters are the Victoria Crosses of her career. Mentally she is a sadist and gets special joy in finding fault with girls and inflicting various kinds of mental tortures.

Of her duties the censorship of letters coming and going through the hostels comes foremost. Then, at odd hours at night she can be seen stealthily moving about the hostel verandahs with an electric torch in her hand; and now and then she peeps into the rooms to see if some girl has not left her bed on a signalling errand through her window to some late lover outside. She has the shrewdness of a policeman in detecting and destroying a love affair. She sees that the girls do not wear the "bolder styles" of dress, use eyebrow pencils, lip stick, or suspend pictures of film stars in their rooms.

If a male friend or relative of a girl visits these hostels, he has to undergo a searching cross-examination. If he unfortunately happens to be coming for the first time, the cross-examination takes several visits before he is finally permitted to see the girl he wants.

In the girls' schools we come across further applications of the science of sexual frustration. Friendship is not allowed to

develop between the day students and the hostelers. It is generally considered that the day-students provide an outlet for the amorous tendencies of the inmates of the hostels by giving them novels, pictures, love poems and often love-letters from their male relatives. Married girls are not admitted in most of the girls' schools on the apparent plea that they cannot succeed in their academic aspirations on account of the distraction caused by domestic affairs and childbirth. Nowadays such married couples increasingly practise birth control and the household duties are not much of a distraction. The real reason underlying this rule is that the unmarried girls may not obtain information on sex matters from their married sisters.

Outside the school and in the home too rules and means are employed to perpetuate sexual frustration.

The motor buses that take the girls to and from the schools are made closed like a safe. All the windows are closed with heavy dark curtains without the least consideration for light and fresh air. Thus twice daily the girls receive practical lessons of the celebrated Black Hole of the Indian "history" in the dark, suffocating interiors of their school buses. Even the daughters of the richest homes are thrust in these miniature Black Holes lest in their private carriages they may develop attachments with some romantic fellows on the road.

The fifth column comes into play when a boy and a girl fall in love and their romance is discovered. (Here I am not writing particularly about schools, but about life in general). But some would question how a boy and a girl can get a chance to fall in love when society is so strict in keeping them apart. This is not so difficult as some people imagine, although perhaps it is becoming increasingly so with each generation. In the lower strata of society the segregation is never complete on account of the living conditions of the poor people. In the middle strata of society where the houses are very near together and often with continuous roofs, the boys and girls frequently develop romance in the kite-flying season. In the higher strata, of course, where people live in separate flats or bungalows such chances are very rare. However, the commonest way in which

a romance begins is a marriage party when the older people are too busy to look after the younger ones who are quick enough to take advantage of the opportunity thus offered to them. And now, when the students—boys as well as girls—are increasingly becoming cinema fans a novel way of falling in love is coming into existence. It often happens that a boy finds a girl with real or supposed resemblance to his favourite film star and begins to run after her or the case may be the reverse, for although a girl cannot run after a boy, she can make him run after her all the same. For instance a girl who resembles Leela Chitnis, Sneh Prabha, Hedy Lamarr, or Merle Oberon, or a boy who resembles Ashok Kumar, Prithvi Raj, Tyrone Power, or Robert Taylor, is very likely these days to find herself or himself involved in some romantic escapade. Those who doubt this ought to know that the resemblances are far from rare, specially when fashions and styles are becoming standardised through the medium of the cinema.

Hence, when a boy and a girl have fallen in love in one of the ways described above, the fifth column begins its work. The boy is painted in the blackest colours in the eyes of the girl—her own relatives and sometimes her jealous schoolmates joining in this. He is represented as a drunkard, prostitute, do-nothing and worst of all as the ex-love of some girl entirely unworthy of him. He is shown to be generally of a very low character and entirely unworthy of attentions from the girl he loves. To the boy the girl is painted in equally black colours, frequently his own relatives and jealous companions joining in this dirty work. They tell him that the girl is of a very loose character and has had relations with so and so, and worst of all has undergone one or more abortions. This is confirmed if she falls ill for a week or so. Everything about her is narrated with graphic details, and the reports are substantiated by showing her in the company of some male relative or a friend of the family, who is pointed out as "the lover". Sometimes the girl's own brother may become "the lover". Eventually this results in a huge gossip and scandal and the lovers end by hating each other, while those who know the truth swagger about in triumph. Then starts the pro-

paganda against love. Other boys and girls are told by their elders and teachers the story of "that boy and that girl". They talk thus, "Have you not heard how they were defamed and everybody spat on them? Would you like to follow their example and bring disgrace to yourselves and bad name to the whole family?" And so on. Thus their minds are completely poisoned and they grow up with a mutual distrust of the opposite sex ingrained into them and love becomes impossible.

Indian poetry stands as a living testimony as to how impossible it is to find love while living in an Indian society. Compare Indian poetry with Western poetry. The poet of the West sings of the joys of love; he is a happy person and those who read him are delighted. The Indian poet wails at the frustration of love (which means nothing but sexual frustration); his life is a burden to him and he makes his readers depressed. Perhaps Indian poetry as the only medium in which to make a show of one's sexual frustrations is not only permitted but positively applauded. Even the moralists join the applause. On the other hand if anyone ventures to write the same thing in prose, it would at once be censured as obscene by those very persons. This is a strange mentality—if you say a thing in a little roundabout way it is all right, but if you take the bull by the horns you are condemned by all.

The absence of kissing on the Indian screen is another contribution of India toward the art of sexual frustration. I have not seen a single Indian film in which a kiss is depicted, although scenes of an intimate nature are freely shown (e.g., the opening scenes of "Sikandar"). Why is kissing such a taboo on the Indian screen, while it is allowed in the Western pictures? The reason is this: kissing is rather an expression of love than of sex. And since in India people do not love when they marry the need for kissing does not arise. What some married people have told me is that they do not like to kiss their wives, and if they do it at all they do so on the cheek—a childish act!—but they never kiss on the lips. To me the people of my own country are far greater materialists than the people of the Western countries. These beasts—

but why should I degrade the noble beasts, I have seen the ox licking the cow!—do not know anything about the art of love-making nor do they wish to learn it. Then they shamelessly claim that they are greater spiritualists while the Westerners are the more materialists.

Even in some Indian films sexual frustration has been glorified. The films like "Bilwamangal", "Raj Rani Mira", and "Vidya Pati" are instances to the point. But happily such films are becoming rarer.

The purdah custom is the most powerful ally of sexual frustration in India. As soon as the girls reach the age of puberty, and sometimes even earlier, they are confined in the four walls of their homes, and are never allowed to set their foot outside again. They are severely chaperoned if they have to go anywhere, and cannot do so without wearing a veil or enshrouding themselves in large sheets. Their life is no better than that of nuns until they are married; after marriage they become chattels of their husbands.

In certain backward families in addition to keeping the girls in purdah they are deliberately kept underfed and are particularly forbidden to partake of the best nourishing foods as "heat-generating foods". (This has nothing to do with the foods scientifically termed "calorific"). Thus, they are allowed to remain unhealthy and under-developed, because it is considered—and rightly so—that if they are allowed to become healthy they will feel "sexy"! So their health is sacrificed for the sake of sexual frustration. This is one of the reasons why so many Indian women die during childbirth or become disabled for life. The majority of them come from purdah-observing homes noted for their high religious tone and spirituality.

Although boys are comparatively free in their choice of food they also are advised by their elders not to partake of the so-called "heat-generating foods". It is believed that they will find it easier to remain "brahma-chari" or celibate if they spare these foods. Every morning students in many homes are given a glassful of syrup of a certain Himalayan herb believed to keep them "cool", in other words, free from sexual desires.

Sex expression even in married life is looked down upon as an unhealthy practice. It is believed to be a necessary evil always to be kept at a minimum. However long a time may pass after a couple is married, they never get over the feeling of shame about sex matters. And when they become parents the cycle of sexual frustration starts over again in the lives of their children.*

*Some of the readers may wish that I should have suggested a remedy for this state of affairs and shown what harm is being caused by the practice of Sexual Frustration in our country. They may send for a copy of the Feb. 1941 "Reason" (price 3 annas) from the Rationalist Association of India, 41 Queen's Road, Bombay, in an article in which I have dealt with this subject.

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CATHOLIC TRUTH ABOUT FRANCIS XAVIER

By 'SAVONAROLA'

AS expected the Catholic Weekly "The Examiner" with an eye on the forthcoming Exposition of St. Francis Xavier devotes several pages of its issue dated 2-5-42 to a write-up of the doings of the saint. The tendency which was pointed out in the last issue of claiming for any saint the most incredible miracles whilst at the same time safeguarding the Church from the charge of crude credulousness is, as was foreseen, prominently to the fore and may be illustrated by the following passage quoted from page 227 (italics-ours):

"Meanwhile the Vadirghers attempted to enter Travancore through the Aramboli pass. According to Mansilhas, *the Saint miraculously stopped the Army. At any rate through Xavier's endeavours peace was concluded between the belligerents*"

The Catholic Church does well to honour Francis Xavier for he was one of her great conquerors—spreading the empire of the Roman Church and the Portuguese State, ensuring a larger income to the Pope and subdued subjects to the Portuguese King. He visited India, Ceylon, Singapore, China, Japan and some of the Far Eastern Isles. The bringer of the Gospel was the inevitable forerunner of the Portuguese gun-men who would soon afterwards land in the places he christianised "to protect the Christians", "on invitation" or of their own accord making use of the technique which in our own day Hitler had merely to copy from the Jesuits. He reinforced the physical bondage of the natives to Portugal with the chains of mental and spiritual enslavement to Rome.

The pious contributor in the Examiner unsuspectingly writes (italic ours):—

"The Paravars or Bharathars of the Fishery Coast being at war with their Muslim neighbours *offered themselves for Christian baptism for the sake of obtaining Portuguese assistance against their enemies*"

If Xavier thought that the principles of Christianity were superior to those of the Bhagwad-Gita, this was no doubt due to

the customary ignorance of an emissary of foreign invaders. The Hindu pundits had ceased to preach and practice their ethics but the Christian priests had also failed to preach and practice theirs. There was quite enough work for Xavier at home in cleaning up the European sinks of iniquity instead of trying to "save the heathen"; but the political aims of the Jesuits required otherwise.

A man of the world, Xavier joked good-humouredly where Christ, less tactful, would have lashed and denounced. In the words of the Catholic writer,

"'How are all your sisters?' he would ask a gentleman in whose home he had found a large number of unspecified females."

If the Indians were to be converted in large numbers the whites had to be counselled not to scandalise the Indians by publicly keeping Indian women as concubines, not to let so much of their fornication be advertised.

"He invariably tried to get unions of Portuguese and Indians regularized," continues the Examiner writer, "but he drew the line at unions between whites and Negroes. 'Impossible', he would say, 'send her away and take a wife worthy of you'." Quite so.

Among the "famous instructions" of this "follower of Christ" quoted in the Examiner article are (italics ours):—

1. "People who worship idols should be expelled from the village"

2. "Endeavour to make yourself loved. Seek to obtain more by love than by fear."

Fr. Valignani, an early Jesuit is quoted by the writer in the "Examiner" with approval as follows (italics ours):—

"Xavier . . . took with him some interpreters and tried to make these fishermen understand that by becoming Christians they would be benefited both in regard to the salvation of their souls and their temporal concerns On his side the Captain of Quilon, to induce them to

follow the saints' advice and to inspire them with a salutary fear for having insulted the Portuguese, had tried to give them an idea of the effects of his wrath, if once excited. At last through the promise made to them and the threats in regard to their fishing, Xavier succeeded in determining a great number of them to accept baptism.

"Then, as though Xavier feared lest their good dispositions should vanish, he proceeded to baptize them all at once without any preliminary instruction. . . . When all the village had been thus baptized the saint presided over the destruction of the idols and pagodas."

Finally the role of Christian missionaries as spies, informers and agents of European states is shown by the following naive admission (italics ours) of Xavier's espionage activities on behalf of the Western states :—

I. "Having settled affairs at Goa he wrote long letters of information to St. Ignatius, Simon Rodriguez (whom he told to see that the Emperor was warned that any attempt of the Spaniards to land in Japan would certainly end in disaster) and the king of Portugal

* * * * *

Why does the *Examiner* make these damaging admissions? For two reasons apparently contradictory, but arising dialectically from the present state of Catholic Apologetics. Anti-Catholic criticism has become so devastating that it can no longer be ignored by the Authorities, but the Catholic herd has to be kept more and more ignorant and made to rely more and more on blind faith. Therefore while Catholic authorities have to exclude the miraculous and include the prosaic details of a saint's life to a larger and larger extent they have to throw dust in the people's eyes by representing that these less creditable aspects of the saints' life arose out of a strange whim or freak of character which has none-the-less to be admired since it affords us the opportunity to indulge in a little "humour" of the nauseating Catholic variety.

The mass conversions of thousands of people within a few hours, frequently without any instruction and almost always directly under the threats of the Portuguese

gun-men—conversions which could not possibly have any spiritual value and which, considering the amount of material, mental and moral degradation that was their cause, are simply revolting—such conversions are to be explained away as the "idiosyncracies" of "A saint in a hurry"! The technique of mixing the miraculous and the mundane, emphasising the miraculous as the normal and the mundane aspects (seen through the colours of what is supposed to be a humorous style) as being very odd indeed, is the keynote of the new type of Catholic hagiography and is the pathological result of 20th century Roman Catholic Faith.

"By their fruits shall ye know them." That Xavier, like most Catholic missionaries was primarily a political agent for Portuguese, Spanish and Roman Catholic 'real politik' is demonstrated to-day in the degrading tendencies of Indian Catholics to ape Western manners and to dissociate themselves from their compatriots in the cause of Indian freedom; whilst the bankruptcy of their spiritual professions is demonstrated by the fact that after 300 years of proselytising and fabulous expenditure, only about $\frac{1}{8}\%$ of the Indians are Roman Catholic today. The meagre conversions show that the Gospel is not so potent as it used to be; however, the clergy having failed, the Church has banned Birth Control and has left the matter of future increase to the holy exertions of its lay faithful.

Mr. P. K. Ray, B.Sc., F. G. M. S., state Geologist, Bandh State, via. Sambalpur, B. N. R. Orissa, would like to correspond with other rationalists, specially geologists, industrial chemists, mining engineers, metallurgists, etc.

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WHAT THEN MUST WE DO?

By PREM NATH

TO-DAY the world is in the throes of the birth of a new order which will decide the fate of humanity, perhaps for centuries to come. The progressive and reactionary forces are at a fatal grip with each other. The social and economic structure of the world is again creaking and groaning. It has miserably failed to solve the social and economic problems of "starvation in the midst of plenty" and "distribution and organisation of creative human labour". The persistent advance of industrialism and progressive thought are striking at the very roots of feudalism and plutocracy.

To-day the champions of the old order in the shape of aggressive Fascism are trying desperately to suppress and smother the progressive forces by bringing race-hatred, destruction, slavery, blood and fire in their most barbaric forms. All that is good in humanity is now at war with sheer brute force and the misuse of the greatest achievements of mankind. The result of this struggle will be a new era, where change of values will take place. New codes of conduct and social relations shall be the order of the day. The world is shaping itself anew. It is passing from the present stage of social evolution to the next.

Modern science has changed our notions of space and time to such an extent that the world seems to have shrunk into a small globe. A journey of months is now a matter of hours. To-day each and every country has more or less its bearing and effect on the determination of the fate of the whole world. Similarly no part of the world can escape from the general fate of humanity at large.

Does India realise it? Do we Rationalists understand the gravity of the hour? Every country or nation had to pass through the various evolutionary stages of ideas and civilisation, till most of the countries have reached the climax of the civilisation of the 20th century and now they are facing another evolutionary crisis. But India even now lives in the atmosphere of the medieval ages. The masses still cherish the old

values about everything, which have no value in the general currency of the idea of the day. The "opiates of religion" and the poisons of traditionalism and feudalism are still running through their veins. Their intoxicated minds still take pleasure and feel divine exhilaration in the gory massacres of innocent men, women and children.

They have no eyes to detect the self-evident religious and feudalistic exploitations. Nay, the nature of the intoxicants is such that it urges them to submit to it willingly. Don't they see the visions of blissful heaven and dismal hell and the sublime workings of the law of Karma and transmigration of the soul? They have not yet been able to get out of the stinking pit of the blind respect, tantamount to worship, of whatever is old and ancient.

The majority of the intelligentsia are in a still worse plight than the masses, for they should have fared better because of their education and culture. But narrow and militant nationalism and atavism are their ideals. "Back to villages", "Ram-raj" or "pakistan" are their popular slogans. These ideals if analysed prove to be constituted of communalism, feudalism, traditionalism, tyranny of caste, dharma and subjection of women. The very popularity of these ideals and slogans among them is sufficient for anybody to gauge their backwardness. They have full sympathy with the reactionary forces of Fascism. In fact they are themselves fascists in mentality.

People have been roused to such a great height of insane frenzy and hysteria by certain interested people that communalism has grown to such colossal proportions that it has become a constant and sinister menace to the safety of the persons of innocent and peace-loving citizens and the unity of the nation. If even in thought the idea of the possibility of a politico-religious civil war comes into my mind, my hair begins to stand on end. People of other countries had ages ago done away with the massacres of St. Bartholomew and the

crusades of the foregoing centuries. They no longer fight for religion. Nowadays they fight for secular objects; they fight for their fundamental rights of existence, they resist exploitation. Must Indians too fight the same fanatic battles of insanity? Can't we learn from their experience and be wiser? Unfortunately it does not seem to be so.

Does not all this indicate the gravity of the condition? Is not India proving a dead-weight on the shoulders of human progress? Here it is said that all this sad and deplorable plight is due to the policy of our foreign masters, who want us to remain as we are, to be forever slaves in mind and body. I do admit the weight of the argument, but this does not acquit us of all responsibilities for the shape of things we hold. What about our excessive deference to authority in all spheres, which does not let us progress? What about the divisions created among the people through caste tyranny and the subjection of Sudras? What about the militant communalism which has engendered so much hatred, prejudice and irrationalism in all spheres of our lives? Could they prevent the Americans or the Irish from being free of their bondage? In spite of their employing all the brute force at their command and exhausting each and every cunning political device, they could not prevent the inevitable from taking place. Ours is the case of an unscrupulous person taking advantage of another's shortcomings. Had there been no pit, rain water could never accumulate. Had we no shortcomings these same foreign masters might have been our best friends on equal terms. What India needs is a Rationalistic outlook about its religious, social and political relations. India needs a mental re-adjustment, for without this she is incapable of solving the intricate problems of the diversity of riches and poverty, social injustices, religious exploitation and political bondage. If once we free ourselves in the social, intellectual and moral fields, it will become very easy for us to achieve our political freedom too.

It is the task of the intelligentsia of the country in general and the Rationalists in particular to endeavour to bring home this mentality to the people. The task is immense, but it need not dishearten

us. We must try to create a nation-wide movement of new thought—or Rationalism. There should be a definite programme of our action. Half measures like weak doses won't do. The graver the situation the more drastic the measures. The Rationalists of India must act boldly and devote all their energies if they have the cause of human progress at heart.

The difficulties in the way of Rationalism in India are manifold. Illiteracy of the masses at large is one of them. Due to their lack of education and weak reasoning every sort of superstitions and irrational propaganda captures their minds. Faith, not reason, becomes their beacon light. Under the present condition of ignorance they are incapable of understanding anything new, no matter how beneficial it might be. Secondly, the socio-religious structure of society does not let any of them deviate or depart from whatever is customary and usual. Suppose a person understands the invalidity of the things around him and would like to get out of the rut, he cannot do so. Because once he openly declares his opinions and views, he knows that he will be ostracized by society and branded as an untouchable; his relations will no longer recognise him, and even if he is prepared to do so at the cost of so much mental misery and substantial loss, he knows that there are no progressive people in the country who will sympathise with him. Therefore thousands of individuals though sceptics at heart but afraid of society, do not find the necessary courage to declare their opinions openly.

The blind respect and adherence to traditions and whatever is ancient is the third great difficulty in the way of Rationalism. Traditions are the expressions of the accumulated experience of a people of a certain age. That experience can hold good and fit in only those circumstances where it was originally gathered. Changed situations and circumstances denote new experiences. And to apply old standards and measures to new situations simply signifies mental bankruptcy and social chaos.

It is objected that Rationalists in India are few in number, therefore they cannot take an effective hand in the shaping of things. But that is not the case. The new Indian generation in spite of its shortcomings and drawbacks has great poten-

tialities too. There are many Rationalists in its ranks and folds and we have simply to come into contact with them. And there are others who have already their doubts about the validity of religion and the justification of the present social and political order. Here we have only to approach them and get them out of the dilemma.

Due to the microscopic minority of Rationalists, no organised effort could be undertaken to further the cause of Rationalism, till a very recent period. In India Rationalist philosophy used to be the creed of a few individuals who had no contact with each other. Now we are fortunate in having R. A. I. in our midst. It is our duty to strengthen it and to form it into a formidable weapon for the fight against superstition and ignorance. And we can strengthen it only when we put a positive and dynamic programme before the Rationalists and the public at large. The more our activities gather momentum, the more shall we be able to strengthen our organisation. Mere passive sympathy or help won't do. We must rise to the occasion. A nation-wide movement with a definite programme is the need of the hour.

My suggestions about such a programme and line of action are as follows :—

The right sort of education is the first essential. The greater the number of educated people the more the chances for Rationalism. Therefore our slogan should be "Educate the masses". This can be achieved by (1) contributing articles to each and every paper which will accept them. In this respect student magazines and papers will be very useful. (2) We must try to organise as many adult-education schools as possible in different parts of the country with a special view to teaching the people facts about science and the bearing of Rationalism on every subject. (3) Most of the education given to our children in present schools is not only useless but positively harmful. From their very childhood they are imbued with a set of ideas and their reasoning powers are left undeveloped. It is high time that we should start schools on secular bases. At least a model school can always be started if serious efforts are made to do so. (4) There are crores of people who do not under-

stand English. It is evident that they cannot be approached through the medium of the English language. Therefore it is necessary that we should create Rationalist literature and start papers in Indian languages. The greater the number of people we approach the more the chances of our success.

To hold lectures and conferences in different parts of the country should be our routine work. This will help us in organising our association on a wider scale and at the same time will acquaint the public of the existence and the objects of our body.

As already suggested by some gentlemen, to start a private limited concern for the publication of Rationalist literature, is a proposition which deserves serious consideration and is worthy of our efforts to achieve it. In that case it will be very easy for us to create literature covering problems and facts peculiar to India only. Moreover our financial condition will also be established on a firm footing.

Individually also we can aid in the great cause of the spread of Rationalism by keeping in touch with like-minded people all over the country and resolutely championing the Rationalist cause in our own social spheres.

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SENSE AND FINANCE

By **MUDVEKAR.**

THE subject of finance appears to have been considerably confounded and submerged under a variety of misleading phrases, such as purchasing power of money, exchange value of money, mystic prowess of money, psychic effect of money—money, money, money. The result is that a general impression appears to have been created that "money" is the source of all public amenities and improvements, and sterling gold is the essence of money. That is to say, without solid glittering gold nothing is possible, and with it, anything and everything. That it is merely a convenient medium or means, and not an end, and that a state of normal prosperity under a system of barter is perfectly possible in a land of ample resources does not appear to have been clearly apprehended even by qualified financiers and economists.

2. The money representing gold, is undoubtedly essential when the opposite party to a bargain is a stranger or outsider, and has no use for the commodity or other services one can give him in exchange for his. But there is no reason for the existence of such a restriction on the internal economy of an independent country, of ample natural resources and scientific developments. In other words, there is no reason why there should be in such a land the problem of poverty, beggary, misery, merely for want of gold.

3. For the proper regulation of the exchange of different kinds of commodities and services, some sort of stable currency is undoubtedly essential. But it need not necessarily be of gold, precious stone, or platinum; nor is a mountain of gold indispensable. Paper, leather, any base metal or marble—along with any available amount of gold—should do, as it already is doing, to no small extent, even under present conditions of inimical and complicated national and inter-national dealings.

4. Now the crucial point for consideration is, why should not India and England,

which have happened to come together and have been bound together, and the natural resources of one and the scientific developments of the other of which are together more than sufficient for the maintenance of both, should not be treated, for purposes of economics, as one big and independent country, and the stark beggary and misery—starvation and nakedness of the masses—should not be banished from the one country as from the other, instead of making up Budgets by resorting to shifts like robbing the beggar or mulcting the poor—by increasing the price of post cards or taxing the vegetable vendor?

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SIDELIGHTS ON RURAL LIFE

By R. B. NAGRIMULE

CULTURE has been defined as the totality of human behaviour (inclusive of group behaviour). It is a comprehensive term which includes the habits, customs, manners, and beliefs of the people. In this article some light is sought to be thrown on some of the tin-gods of the unsophisticated villagers.

The ryot has not drunk deep at the fountain of knowledge. He is not philosophically inclined. He does not bother himself with the problem of Man. He has not heard of the 'elan vital' of Bergsonian philosophy. He does not know that the universe—the world of sight and sound, the world of phenomena—is only the manifestation of the Absolute idea according to Hegel. The well known doctrines of Materialism—that the character and contents of human consciousness are determined by the economic conditions of social existence and that revolution or qualitative change is the logical and necessary outcome of accumulated quantitative changes—are beyond the mental horizon of the villagers. The philosophy of the Bhagawad Gita—the Song Celestial—also is beyond his ken. His philosophy is that of fatalism. He believes that his career in life is writ on his forehead (invisibly) by God at the time of his birth. Hence at every twist and turn of his fortune, he does not muster courage and face the situation boldly, but desperately and blindly accepts his lot as a divine dispensation.

The ryot believes in a number of spirits in addition to the Gods of the Hindu pantheon. Every variation in the physical condition is attributed to the influence of the spirits. If a child catches cold or contracts tuberculosis, the parent attributes it to the displeasure of the spirits. He rushes to an astrologer, the fortune teller. On payment of a moderate fee the astrologer agrees to help the afflicted parent. Some time is spent in tricks with cowries, meanwhile the astrologer tries to elicit from the parent the real cause and nature of the complaint. With the information thus obtained he tells the parent that a particular spirit is angry and recommends a Manthravadi—the priest not of gods but of spirits.

The Manthravadi is a fortunate man living on the superstition of the villagers. He is one of the leaders of the village who has to be reckoned with. He is believed

to have 'superhuman' powers. He sits cross-legged on a tigerskin or a deerskin spread on the veranda of his house or in the shade of a big tree, with his face marked with ashes and sandal wood paste. The holy thread is made to be conspicuous.

The ryot must first satisfy the acquisitive appetite of the priest. Then the Manthravadi in conjunction with the ryot propitiates the spirit concerned by offering flowers, boiled rice, cocks, etc., etc. In the case of a 'senior' spirit the propitiation is conducted on a grand scale. The process is marked with scriptural solemnity and superstitious loyalty, with miniature 'yajnas' and other rituals. At long last, when the patient is seriously ill, the priest recommends a native doctor of the place. But the doctor arrives too late, for by that time the disease advances beyond hope of cure.

Sometimes the dual roles of fortune telling and propitiation of the spirits are played by the same individual. He is generally an expert in duping the villagers. He is able to hoodwink them. He is capable of some arguments in defence of his art and the popular beliefs. He knows something about the most common diseases, and also the medicinal effect of some herbs. His arguments are of the same nature as the ones commonly advanced in favour of such superstitions. The fallacy of the reasoning is not detected by the superstitious villagers. An argument of the same nature is here quoted from Sir James Fraser :

"Can anything be plainer" he (the man of magic) might say "than that I light my two-penny candle on earth and that the sun then kindles his great fire in heaven? I should be glad to know whether when I put on my green robe in spring, the trees do not afterwards do the same? These are facts patent to everybody and on them I take my stand."

The fallacy in the reasoning is in asserting that what follows is the result of the preceeding action. The event that follows need not necessarily be the result of the former action. The Manthravadi asserts that certain things follow the performance of a particular ceremony by him, but invariably, the case is as illustrated above. Another feature regarding the Manthravadi is that he knows a bit of psychology on the basis of which some of the

imaginary sicknesses can be cured. To mention a case in point, a Manthravadi prescribed a particular herb for use by a woman who was said to be unwell. It was said that the herb was to be used till the patient began to dream of the gods of the Manthravadi. The sickness was really mental sickness and not physical. The remedy was of a psychological character. The mental sickness was sought to be cured by constant contemplation on the gods of the priest and hence the treatment was to continue till the permanent stamping of the priest's gods on the subconscious mind of the patient. But the unsophisticated believe that cure was due to the ashes given by the priest which were to be taken along with the herb. The fact of the matter is that the priest has no supernatural or superhuman powers, but he knows a bit of psychology and also that faith can work miracles.

The remarks of Pundit Nehru regarding them may be cited in this connection. He has said in *Glimpses of World History*. "In our country unfortunately many a man with a tuft of hair on his head, or matted locks, or long beard, or intricate markings on the forehead, or saffron cloak poses as an agent of the supernatural and fleeces the common people."

The illiteracy of the ryot is a patent fact. This puts him at a great disadvantage. To mention a case, a beaten-rice vendor was approached one night by a man in khaki uniform and was asked to put his thumb impression on a sheet of paper (with something written on it). The vendor was given to understand that it was his application for professional licence. The poor man did what was demanded in implicit good faith. But in a few days it was found that it was a promissory note for Rs. 50. The 'creditor' claimed his full pound of flesh. But with the help of a leading social worker of the place it was amicably settled by the vendor paying his 'creditor' Rs. 5.

The ryot is usually addicted to drink. As the proverb says 'when ale is in, wit is out'; and he disturbs the peace of his family all night long.

The relation of the ryot to the landlord is purely economic. But tradition and diplomacy of the landlord have tended to give it a religious colour. For example, on the first day of the Solar year (usually in the second week of April) the landlord

and the other male members of his family sit, after dinner, on a mattress, spread on the veranda of the house. All the tenants must turn up before them, in order, present a vegetable (which varies according to the distance the tenant has to come from and also with their caste) to the landlord, bow down in reverence to him and to others individually and be blessed by them. The process is undergone by every tenant in all solemnity.

When a tenant's daughter or son marries, the bridal pair should come to the landlord's house, bow down and be blessed by them. In both cases bowing is almost prostration. Such practises tend to make the tenants believe that they are bound to the landlord not only by economic ties but also by religious ties, since in Hindu society prostration as well as the practices referred to are not mere matters of courtesy but have a scriptural sanction and significance that partake of religious allegiance.

Certainly, Upton Sinclair hinted at the truth when he said, 'Prophet means profit'.

The ryot has no interest in politics. He has an impression of Mr. Gandhi and the Congress as a single entity represented by the Khadi cap. He has a vague memory of having heard of Mr. Jinnah and also the Liberals. He has heard of the war and asks a stranger as to how fares the army of 'Our King'. The latter is the only expression in his political dictionary and he cannot imagine Republicanism. He is not interested in politics and hears of the political situation with practical unconcern when a political worker of indefatigable energy harps on his eternal theme—Present Political Situation.

The age-long slumber of the traditional Indian can be put an end to and be stirred to action by universalisation of education accompanied by a renaissance movement. The need of the age is the permeation of the national life with the spirit of scientific enquiry, the spirit of critical insight, the attitude of unreserved acceptance of the supremacy of reason with a view to establishing a system of philosophy and ethics verifiable by experience and independent of arbitrary assumptions. Then only will the traditional Indian rise to the state (desired by Dr. Tagore of hallowed memory)

"Where the cool stream of reason has not lost its way in the dreary desert sand of habit."—Tagore (*Gitanjali*)

See thou, then, to what damned
deeds religion urges men.

—Lucretius.

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Abraham Solomon.

The writers of the articles in this journal are themselves responsible for the views expressed and do not implicate the Rationalist Association of India in any way.

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CONTENTS.

Dew Drops by Abraham Solomon	..	..	85
Hindu Medicine by R. D. Karve	..	..	87
Social Progress by Shakuntala Paranjpye	..	..	89
Review	..	..	92
The First Indian Film that Glorifies Atheism by Atib Usmani	..	..	93
Are the Claims of Yoga to Clairvoyance Demonstrable? by R. J. Gokhale	..	..	94
The Purpose of Life by Rameshwar Prasad Gupta	..	..	95
Manifesto	..	..	98

DEW DROPS

THE extent to which religious fanaticism vitiates Indian public life is well known to rationalists but is not fully realised by many, at least not enough to make them actively combat it at every possible opportunity. The following should serve as an eye opener.

* * *

Miss Mariam Khan Saheb, daughter of Dr. Khan Saheb, Ex-premier of the North-West Frontier Province is engaged to be married to Ft : Lt. Kanwar Jaswant Singh. This has created a very serious situation in the Frontier Province. Religious fanatics and political opponents of Dr. Khan Saheb are carrying on agitation in the Province and the tribal areas. The fiancé of Miss Khan Saheb bears a name which enables fanatics to misrepresent the position. The fact is that Kanwar Jaswant Singh is an Indian Christian belonging to the family of the late Raja Harnam Singh. Dr. Khan Saheb while in England married an English lady. Miss Mariam Khan Saheb was born and brought up in England and also had her education there. Her marrying an Indian Christian should not have created such a storm as to oblige Dr. Khan Saheb to retire from public life. As usual communalists are attempting to exploit the situation.

* * *

We congratulate Dr. Khan Saheb on the following courageous statement which he has issued :—

"The engagement of my daughter to an Indian Christian young man, Flight Lieutenant Kanwar Jaswant Singh, has given an opportunity to my opponents to exploit it and to do false propaganda among ignorant

people and rouse their sentiments. Everybody knows my life and the principles I stand for. I have always preached for absolute freedom and non-suppression of human rights. My child has chosen her partner of her own free will. She is entitled to my blessing. Any interference is out of the question, as it will be a violation of my principles. I take the entire responsibility. I may also make it absolutely clear that my brother is not in any way connected with the matter.

"I have never been a leader of the people, but I have been their servant always. I think I have served them to the best of my ability. Now I feel that my services are no longer required, though I wish them good luck and good-bye."

* * *

The immediate necessity for all the progressive forces in India to *organise* themselves in order to combat these anti-progressive, reactionary and fanatical forces of religious intolerance should be obvious to all. Sporadic efforts on the part of a few courageous individuals will be of little avail unless they are backed by a strong organisation of men and women who are determined to carry the fight into the very heart of superstition and ignorance.

* * *

In the course of an interview with the *Filmindia* special representative, the Rt. Hon. Dr. M. R. Jayakar expressed himself strongly against mythological films.

"The miracles our saints perform on celluloid" he observed, "are a horrible torture to me. Personally I would prefer these saints and mythological figures to be left severely alone. Supernatural powers attributed to them need not be immortalised on celluloid. What we need for popular education is the spread of rationalism, a faith in human endeavour to rise to its highest.

"I am not against bringing them to the screen if their virtues are so depicted as to be within the reach of our serious endeavour. They must inspire us with the confidence that we can resemble them and reach their moral and spiritual height. What is the use of making them fly in an aeroplane as Tukaram does, or to move a stone wall which Dnyaneshwar not only moves but sends into thin air?

"These pictures may be popular, because our people are emotionally superstitious... but film producers must carefully guard against excessively pandering to popular taste by producing such abnormalities. An emotional people need realistic pictures as a corrective of national bias. Films must take up their share to root out superstition, explode miracles and help to promote a rational outlook on life's affairs."

Dr. Jayakar mentioned "Zola," "Edison", "Good-bye Mr. Chips", "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" and the "Mortal Storm" as films he would like Indian producers to have as illustrations to copy. He felt certain that in India's history, both modern and mediaeval, there were incidents and personalities about whom such beautiful films could be made.

Dr. Jayakar was entirely in favour of Indian educated youth of both the sexes taking up films as a career. He brushed aside the argument of lack of morals in the filmland as exaggerated and asserted that morals were one's own affair, as long as they did not vitiate public taste or decency.

* * *

We wonder when our film producers will either be capable or have the courage to follow the suggestions given by Dr. Jayakar. At least, at present, most of them are more interested in the cashbox than in contributing to the social and cultural progress of India.

* * *

A thundering alternative is put before us by our Indian Fuhrer. "Leave India to God or anarchy," says Mr. Gandhi. Beg pardon, Mahatmaji, our mortal mind can see no difference.

Abraham Solomon.

We regret that the last issue of *Reason* was very much delayed due to unexpected difficulties and could not be posted within the time allowed by the Post Office. We have been compelled to make this issue a combined one for June and July. We hope our readers will excuse us for the inconvenience caused.

Asst. Editor.

HINDU MEDICINE

By R. D. KARVE

WE have seen the general attitude of Hindus, even so-called logicians, towards the Vedas. Some say they were written by God, some paraphrase it by saying that they have no author, but the conclusion in both cases is that there cannot be any error in the Vedas.

In the case of Hindu medicine, we are not concerned with the Vedas at all, but medical knowledge was considered so important that it acquired the name Ayurveda, meaning knowledge of life, the word Veda meaning knowledge. Now in the case of the Vedas, we have definite books which are supposed to contain the Hindu religion. But the Ayurveda is not any particular book at all. It is a general term supposed to include all the medical treatises written by the ancients. But the word Veda having once been accepted as applicable to this knowledge, the general attitude mentioned above is also applied to this medical collection. Thus Ayurvedic physicians have implicit faith in all the statements made in these works, though times out of number, glaring mistakes have been pointed out. When, for instance, the Haffkine Institute in Bombay tested the Ayurvedic remedies for serpent-bite, the result was that out of a total of 140 remedies mentioned in the Ayurveda, not one was successful.

Now it cannot be denied that the ancients did have some very effective remedies and I have myself seen cases given up by modern allopathic doctors which were completely cured by Ayurvedic treatment. A lady who was completely bed-ridden after a delivery was assured by her doctors after one year's treatment that though there was no immediate danger, she would never recover her powers of locomotion again. After that, an Ayurvedic Vaidya took her up and in a few months' time, she had completely recovered her health and lived for some years more. A prominent Bombay man took hundreds of injections for eczema from a specialist with English qualifications and finding these no good, he called an Ayurvedic physician from his native place,

who cured him completely by a system of fomentation and baths. Innumerable such instances could be quoted, but there are also other instances which show that the empirical knowledge of these physicians does not always serve the purpose.

Not that Ayurvedic medicine is all empirical. They have their theories, but in the light of modern knowledge, these theories are sometimes perfectly ridiculous, and one theory being that the Ayurveda cannot be wrong, orthodox physicians feel obliged to stick by them and to refuse to accept any new discovery. Nobody blames the ancients for not having reached the modern standard of knowledge when they had not modern means at their disposal. Obviously the discovery of germs as the causes of some diseases was not possible when the microscope was unknown, but since Ayurvedic physicians do not find anything about germs in the Ayurveda, they simply refuse to accept germs as a cause of diseases. If you show them germs taken from a patient under a microscope, they will acknowledge their presence, but argue that the disease produced the germs and not the germs the disease. Indeed an orthodox friend of mine went so far as to say that since he could not see the germs with the naked eye, but with the instrument alone, it must be the microscope that was responsible for the germs!

It seems that the Ayurveda opines that the intercourse of two women between themselves leads to pregnancy (of one or both?) and that the resulting child will have no bones. A leading exponent of that system in Bombay once actually offered to show me a child without bones in proof of that statement. Of course he said a child like that cannot live. I pointed out to him that even if he showed me a child without bones, that would not prove his point at all, but he thought it would be some kind of proof.

After that, I was not surprised to find in a monthly magazine conducted by this same physician, some extraordinary statements as to the causes of certain diseases.

A correspondent had asked him to say what causes disease, and he says in reply: "Ayurveda gives the following five things as leading to disease: 1. Drinking too much water; 2. Sexual excesses; 3. Sleeping in daytime; 4. Keeping awake at night; 5. Not attending promptly to calls of nature." Then he proceeds to give details, of which I mention only a few. Too much water leads to the formation of gases in the stomach, cough, stomach-ache, colds, indigestion, and this last may cause any disease. Loss of appetite, loss of hearing and headaches are also due to the same cause.

Sexual excesses cause diabetes, piles, and a general feeling of heat and burning in the body, and also fistula and of course impotence. Sleep during daytime causes indigestion, cough, heaviness, enlargement of the spleen, anaemia, and diseases of the tongue and the throat. Want of sleep at night also causes indigestion, constipation, jaundice, anaemia, want of control, vomiting, headaches and heart disease. The last cause of all leads to an alternation of diarrhoea and constipation, loss of appetite, piles and leucoderma. If you avoid these five causes, you will keep perfect health. Perfectly simple! How far modern allopathy will accept these as the causes of the diseases mentioned, it is not for me to say.

In the same issue, a reader asks, "What is the Ayurvedic name for Influenza?", to which the editor coolly replies, "Influenza is just an ordinary cold. There is nothing more to it. It is caused by a change of weather."

Government is at present encouraging the study of Ayurveda. This is as it should be, provided modern methods are applied to find out just how much of it is scientifically true and how much is merely unreliable tradition. Indian drugs which have not already been taken up by allopathy have to be analyzed and carefully studied afresh by modern methods. Something of the kind was being done at the Haffkine Institute, I believe, but the founding of Ayurvedic Colleges and the giving of degrees in Ayurvedic knowledge is hardly likely to lead to any progress, so long as the orthodox attitude to the Ayurveda does not entirely disappear. Even ancient knowledge must

not be considered sacred and must be open to improvement like all scientific knowledge. Otherwise money spent on Ayurvedic Colleges is pure waste.

From one department of nature after another the gods are reluctantly or contemptuously dismissed and their provinces committed to the care of certain abstract ideas of ethers, atoms, molecules, and so forth, which though just as imperceptible to human senses as their divine predecessors, are just by prevailing opinion to discharge their duties with regularity and dispatch, and are accordingly firmly installed on the vacant thrones amid the general applause of the more enlightened portion of mankind. Thus, instead of being peopled with a noisy, bustling crowd of full-blooded and picturesque deities, clothed in the graceful form and animated with the warm passions of humanity, the universe outside the narrow circle of our consciousness is now conceived as absolutely silent, colourless, and deserted. The cheerful sounds which we hear, the bright hues which we see, have no existence, we are told, in the external world: the voices of friends, the harmonies of music, the chime of falling waters, the solemn roll of ocean, the silver splendour of the moon, the golden glory of the sunset, the verdure of summer woods, and the hectic tints of autumn—all these subsist only in our minds; and if we imagine them to have any reality elsewhere we deceive ourselves. . . . Outside of ourselves there stretched away on every side an infinitude of space without sound, without light, without colour—a solitude traversed only in every direction by an inconceivably complex web of silent and impersonal forces. That, if I understood it, is the general conception of the world which modern science has substituted for polytheism."

—Sir James Frazer.

MAN MAKES HIMSELF

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SOCIAL PROGRESS

By **SHAKUNTALA PARANJPYE**

“**S**URVIVAL of the Fittest” is a law of nature. It necessarily ensures progress. Those who succeed in this struggle for existence have not only to fight hard to win the battle but have to maintain this high level of fitness if they desire to go on living, as otherwise the moment they relax, fitter beings would immediately wipe them out of existence. They have therefore to combat not only with others of their own species but with every surrounding organism with which they come into contact. This keen competition for the right to survive is going on perpetually amongst all organisms existing entirely under natural conditions. Now, it is a characteristic of nature to do its utmost not to let a species die out of existence, a characteristic which instinctively urges an organism to procreate profusely, with the innate hope of succeeding in getting at least a few of these issues to survive and to procreate in their turn, thus managing to keep the species alive. This excess of procreation, the consequent deadly struggle for existence, and the inevitable colossal destruction of life are the three phases of nature's artful way of securing an enormous choice to select from and thus employ the very best specimens of every species for purposes of propagation. Man, however, gradually started disregarding nature. He tried to improve on a life of perpetual struggle, alertness and fitness, that nature had chalked out for him. He was endowed with a faculty of thinking and of reasoning. He made full use of it in inventing methods and means to make life less and less strenuous. He disliked nature's cruel ways of annihilating the unfit and with the help of his brain-power he worked out various means of self-protection. Unlike other beings, man could think of the future which he tried to render as happy as possible. He built houses and temples, schools and hospitals. He constructed more and more effective appliances for tilling the land and killing the beast. He invented better and better means of locomotion. All through this process of securing a life of ease and comfort he gradually lost his

physical fitness which was nature's fundamental requirement for ensuring his survival. He specialised as it were in over-cultivating his brain while he neglected his physique and managed to survive entirely on the strength of the former. His disregard for the laws of nature increased *pari passu* with his cerebral development. A change of values took place. Physical might was no longer the right as far as the civilized individual was concerned.

He organised the society and invented such powerful weapons that he could conquer the whole world. Yet though the civilised man grew collectively very much stronger than his primitive brother, individually he became utterly weak and helpless in comparison with the latter, because his collective superiority was entirely due to the external aid of powerful implements and indicated no personal superiority. In fact, were the civilised man to lose the help of these powerful instruments he would be utterly unable to compete with his primitive rival. His weak and delicate constitution will have to give way before the physical vigour of the uncivilised man.

Contemplation of such possibilities often makes one think of the prehuman Reptile Age when these animals specialised in colossal sizes wherewith they attained supremacy of the world. This supremacy, however, did not last as over-specialisation in size made these animals heavy and unwieldy. They could move only with great difficulty and in times of danger they were unable to escape their foe. Ultimately they had to give way, and it is worth taking note of the fact that it was the very specialisation in gigantic volume which made them supreme, that led also to their ruin when it was overdone and other essential qualities such as agility, suppleness, alertness, etc., were neglected. This illustration from the history of evolution often makes one wonder if man, the lord of the present age, is not over-specialising in his brain at the cost of physical fitness and whether one day it might not lead him

to his doom. Were he, however, to utilise his brain-power in contriving to make his race keep fit in spite of its life of ease and comfort, and were he to encourage the procreation of his race by the fittest specimens of it he would be on an eternal path of all-round progress and would be able to hold his own against all odds. Were he to cultivate his physical side along with the cerebral one he would prove superior in every contingency. Were all the parts of his organism in excellent state of health and were they always to function properly he would be able to withstand any amount of danger. At present, however, the physical system of the civilised man is in a lamentable state, either of partial disuse or of bad functioning. His digestion is bad, his teeth rotten and his eyesight feeble. Yet he manages to pull on with the help of drugs, false teeth and eye glasses. He has very little if any power to resist disease. Yet he contrives to survive, so revolutionary is his work in medicine. He has in fact outwitted nature, by producing effective antidotes for the most deadly of her diseases, with the result that at present the civilised man succeeds in keeping alive many undeserving human beings who, had they been left to the mercy of mother nature, would long ago have breathed their last. Not only does he keep them alive but he also allows them full liberty to produce a progeny which cannot possibly be of the desirable type. Now, it is a well-known fact that the weak and undeserving specimens of a species breed much more profusely than its strong and healthy types. This profuse progeny of the undeserving is in its turn kept alive as long as possible, with the help of artificial means. Gradual degeneration of the human species is the obvious outcome of this double evil, viz., that of nature on the one hand being allowed to multiply the numbers of the undeserving, but on the other hand not being allowed to destroy the unfit in her drastic manner. Were man however to stop the undeserving from producing any progeny, he would have solved more than half the problem. He rightly dislikes nature's waste of energy in tremendous over-production of life and the consequent colossal destruction of it. It was however the only way in which nature could ensure the work of progress. Now, man of the present age has partially

succeeded in either withholding or delaying this massive destruction of life. Is it not then obvious that he should exercise an equal amount of control over its production, if the balance is to be maintained? Nature made sure of progress by wiping out the less fit and allowing the fittest to survive. The civilised man can hardly be expected to follow nature in this respect. He could however obtain the same result were he to prevent the unfit from reproducing themselves and allowed only the fit specimens of the race to procreate. Compulsory sterilisation of individuals unfit for reproduction is the first measure that ought to be adopted by every society desirous of progress. Insanity, for instance, has been proved to be a hereditary characteristic. Why then allow the mentally deficient to procreate and burden the society with their feeble-minded progeny? Then there are some diseases like tuberculosis and leprosy which although not directly hereditary render their victims so ill and helpless, that they are entirely unable to look after their children, who moreover stand in great danger of catching the infection from their parents. It is unfair therefore to allow individuals suffering from such diseases to produce children who must necessarily be a burden to some third party. Child-bearing is moreover in such cases a mortal danger to many a woman. Similarly venereal disease in its incurable stage ought also to be an adequate reason for sterilisation. Many a blind and physically disabled child will thereby be saved the tortures of life. Sterilisation of the undeserving in every generation would not only stop their multiplying themselves, but would gradually reduce their numbers almost to nil. It is amazing however to discover how very few of even the most civilised countries realise the urgency of adopting such a measure, which at its best is only a negative branch of eugenics.

A positive effort towards progress of the human race will have to be made on a selection basis. The fittest specimens of the race should be encouraged to breed most, bearing well in mind of course that a proper spacing of children is essential both for the health of the mother and her children. Some countries desirous of increasing their birth-rate are known to have encouraged child-bearing by the

award of bonuses. Such an encouragement if it lays down no condition as to the desirability of the parents, stands in danger of benefiting only the lower strata of the society. Needy people will produce children just for the sake of money. These children will not be well looked after. Thus an indiscriminate encouragement of child-bearing, even though it might succeed in raising the birth-rate of a country, will soon bring about not only a general deterioration of its standard but will also lead to a proportionate increase in its death-rate. Of course no country in the world at present needs to take any measures for the increase of its population. Several countries on the other hand would be much better off with a considerable decrease in their numbers. Politicians and ambitious patriots think otherwise; they all want their countries to have teeming populations, which could well spare millions to die on the battle-field. In a war, unfortunately, on both sides it is the best of the population that perish, the old and the infirm individuals being exempted from being mobilised. Even during the primitive days it was always the strongest individuals of a clan that fought the strongest of another, leading to the destruction of many a choice specimen of both parties. In those days, however, the survivors, the fittest according to the rule, did their full duty of populating the next generation. The victorious leader of a tribe was the lord and master of all the women of his tribe and of the conquered tribes. Principles of monogamy and of Christian morality were then unknown. The work of procreation therefore was carried out by the best and fittest men of the race. In fact even today we follow the same principles of selection so far as the breeding of our domestic animals is concerned. We take great care to preserve the best stallion, the best bull, the best dog and the best cock for our mares, our cows, our bitches and our hens. We destroy the weaker or the undesirable types of males or use them for purposes other than those of procreation. One select male of a species serves hundreds of females of the same species. The ensuing progeny is bound to be an improvement on the

previous stock. As regards the human race, however, we allow every third-rate man the right of procreation. An entire woman is entrusted to him. Even countries like India, where polygamy is no sin, are agitating to render it illegal. Women rise in indignation at the injustice of man being allowed to have more than one wife, whilst a woman must abide by only one man. Now woman, if allowed to have more than one husband at a time, can bring up one family only, whereas a man can have as many families of children as he has wives. Embittered by jealousy at being kept in restraint by the man, the woman, instead of fighting for more liberty for herself, is endeavouring to restrict that of the man. She would do better first to study the problem of matrimony and procreation, with an open mind and then work out a better solution of the problem. In fact matrimony and procreation are two entirely different problems although religion and law have tried to unify them. Matrimony is a business contract whilst procreation is an unconscious happening as far as the man is concerned and a conscious happy event as far as the woman is concerned. Matrimony is entirely a personal matter whilst procreation is also a social undertaking. Society has every right therefore to lay down its conditions as regards the latter, although it might leave individuals perfect freedom in the case of the former. Honestly speaking, we find that marriage is usually a matter of convenience for both the man and the woman, for most women it is a means of livelihood and protection for herself and her children, whilst for man it is the surest way of securing at least one woman for the satisfaction of his sex-instinct and for looking after his corporal necessities. Woman no doubt also possesses the sex-instinct but hers is not as continuous as that of the man. To her it comes in cycles, lasts for a short time, leaving her to mind her children for the best part of every cycle. One has only to cast a glance at the females of the animal world to assure oneself of this fact. Under the present circumstances it so happens, or it is believed to happen, that the husband of every woman is the father of all her children.

I have shown above how necessary it is to select the best mates for propagation purposes if society is to progress. Now it would hardly be practicable for such a select man to marry hundreds of women whose children he could easily be the father of. Also we can hardly be expected to destroy the non-select males of the human species as we do those of the non-human species. Besides, the human child being much more helpless than that of other animals, most of the mother's time and energy are taken up by her children, leaving her comparatively little time to earn her living as well as that of her children, a task which can be conveniently allotted to the man not selected for propagation purposes. Such a man in the first place should be made incapable of begetting children, whilst allowing him to be fully capable of experiencing the pleasures of sex, since sex indeed is his primary right as motherhood is that of a woman, fatherhood being only a matter of accident and faith, and not of instinct as far as the man is concerned. What matters then if he feeds a woman and her children provided she fulfils all his bodily wants? Moreover with the help of modern medical inventions a conception can easily be effected without any bodily contact on the part of the man and woman. An injection of the semen from the desired male is more effective than an act of sexual intercourse. No husband should object to his wife getting a child from some one else by means of such an operation. It is no worse than the transfusion of some one else's blood into the veins of his anaemic wife. In fact I should not at all be surprised if bottled semen of the best men, could one day be obtained in chemist's shops for conception purposes. Human society would fast improve if some deliberate steps as regards human breeding were adopted. Marriage could still fulfil its useful function of material convenience.

It is here then that woman embittered and jealous of man's supremacy should come forward and, instead of trying to force their husbands to be monogamous, demand of them their primary female right of obtaining children from the best male they can find or that society can find for them.

REVIEW

The Great Reality, by D. Pant, B. Com. (Bom.), Ph.D. (T. C. D.) Publishers, Kitab Mahal, 63 Zero Road, Allahabad. Pp. 178, price Rs. 2-4 or Sh. 4.

The author has here expressed his views on various subjects such as Religion, Life, Politics, Sex, Culture, War, Gandhism. He seems to be fond of high-sounding phrases, very often devoid of syntax and his ideas are often such as no sensible person will accept. He says on p. 8 for instance: "I believe in Power and I strongly believe that this old earth is the pleasure ground for the brave—the Votaries of Power. The weak are door-mats: they must remain under the heels of the strong." These are barbarous sentiments, if civilisation has any meaning at all. In fact he expresses sympathy with the dictators and shows want of judgment in mentioning Hitler, Mussolini and Kemal Pasha in the same breath. Speaking of Truth, he quotes Nietzsche: "Truth is that form of error which enables a particular species to prevail," which may be very convenient for Hitler, but is as stupid a definition as could be imagined. He thinks war is a necessity and a very useful necessity because it develops manly qualities. It is impossible to give a list of all the stupid ideas in this book. The author advocates the bombing of civil populations in war, "because the civil is the reserve upon which the military draws" (p. 120). He writes a lot about sex and says, "Much of the sex rubs will disappear if woman is considered as a delicious instrument of pleasure" (p. 165). If he expects the modern woman to accept this, he is very much mistaken. I find it difficult to recommend this book to anybody.

R. D. KARVE.

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DIRECTOR KEDAR SHARMA'S "ARMAN"

By ATIB USMANI

"**A**RMAN," a Ranjit Picture, written and directed by Mr. Kedar Sharma, is the first Indian picture in which Atheism is glorified. I congratulate Mr. Sharma on behalf of all the Rationalists in India for his daring attempt to produce the first picture of its kind in our country. Although the picture is far from perfect and leaves much to be desired, nevertheless it sets forth a new and progressive theme and will be greatly appreciated by everyone of the advanced and broadminded persons who have the betterment of our country at heart.

Atheism is an extremely delicate subject for pictures and is bound to excite the hostile emotions of the average cinema-goer. Mr. Sharma's success lies in his ability to present this essentially unpopular theme with such subtlety and acumen as to avoid the faintest suggestion of offending the common mind. He gives to the public a bitter pill so perfectly sugared as to be swallowed whole without protest.

The picture tells the story of a man who has realized that science is the only means available to mankind for probing into the mysteries of the universe and bringing out the truth. He dedicates his life to scientific research for perfecting a device that would mechanically reveal the minds of the voluntary sitters. He is distracted in his work by ignorant and malicious persons who hate science and love God. They come to question him whether he is aware of the existence of the Almighty and His power. His answer is impressive. He clearly denies the existence of God and tells them that God is nothing but a fiction invented by wicked persons to fool the poor and simple-minded people. For a while it seems that his opponents would win. His experiment fails, his sitter is killed during its process, and he himself becomes totally blind. It is during

his blindness that he is discovered by a village girl who falls in love with him. When she discovers that the man she loves is blind she persuades him to believe in God and take to a life of religion. Once more his undaunted spirit rises unconquered, and he asks her to pray to her God and show him if this God has the power to restore his sight. She goes offering prayers from temple to temple but without success. Losing all hope she decides to pass the rest of her life in jungles. There she meets a "Sadhu" who is passing his life in penance and solitude, and she becomes his disciple. One day he learns from her the reason of her renunciation, and promises to make her a potion that would restore the sight of her beloved. The audience is aware of a conflict in the "sadhu's" mind and finally when he is about to handle the phial containing the potion to the girl he succumbs to his desires and attempts to rape her. It is remarkable that a lifetime of religious practices had failed to make him "good," and had instead given a brutality and savageness to his passions. In the ensuing scuffle the "sadhu" is speared to death by the girl. With the phial now safely in her possession she returns to her blind beloved. The potion is applied to his eyes and his sight is restored. But here does not follow any emotional scene of false praising to an imaginary being or chanting and cringing before unsightly idols. Instead he is grateful to the girl and marries her.

By the way, the appearance of Mr. Motilal who played the scientist in the picture is strongly reminiscent of Sir C. V. Raman!

It is my sincere hope that other film producers will follow in the footsteps of Mr. Kedar Sharma and produce pictures on the same theme but with greater appeal and entertainment value.

ARE THE CLAIMS OF YOGA TO CLAIRVOYANCE DEMONSTRABLE?

By R. J. GOKHALE

ONE of the claims of the science of Yoga is that its practice confers occult powers, especially Clairvoyance. For instance, see the following extracts from Mahamahopadhyaya Ganganath Jha's English Translation of Patanjali's Yoga sutras and Vyasa's commentary on these (विभूतिपाद) Chapter III:

Sutra 26. From discipline converged on the sun, follows the knowledge of regions.

Commentary—There are seven regions—

(1) From Avichi, the nethermost part of Hell to the summit of Mount Meru —i.e., our earth

(2) Sky

(3) Mahendra-Loka

(4) Prajapatya-Loka

(5) Brahma-Loka

(6) Tapo-Loka

(7) Satya-Loka

This earth consists of seven continents. In the centre lies Meru. On the southern side of this is the Jambu tree.....To the north of Meru are three mountains 16,000 miles high.....To the south of Meru, are three mountains extending over 16,000 miles; within these are three countries each 72,000 miles.

Jambu dweep extending over 800,000 miles surrounded by seven oceans twice its size. Then follow other continents Shak, Kusha, Kraunch, Shalmala, Magadh and Pushkar, each twice the size of the one following it—so also the seven oceans of sugarcane juice, wine, butter, curd, gruel, milk, pure water. Thus the seven continents reach the extent of 40,000,000,000 miles.

The planets and the stars are bound up with the Pole star; their movements are indicated by the regularity of air currents; they are located above the Meru and keep constantly revolving.

The Mahendra Region is inhabited by six celestial tribes.....They are born without sexual intercourse and have loving Apsaras for their consorts.....etc.

Sutra 27. From Discipline converged on the moon there follows knowledge of the position of the stars.

Sutra 29. From Discipline converged on the navel circle there follows knowledge of the constitution of the body.

Commentary—The body contains the three humours—Wind, Bile and Phlegm; and there are seven essential constituents—Skin, blood, flesh, sinews, bone, marrow and semen.

Sutra 31. (From converging Discipline) on the Tortoise artery, follows steadiness.

Commentary—Below the 'pit,' there is an artery of the shape of a tortoise.

The Tortoise Artery resembles in shape the alligator or the coiled snake.

Now my query is: Is the information contained in the above extracts correct? If it is not, does it mean that the commentator is a mere scholar who has no practical knowledge of Yoga?

However, if the information in these passages is merely in accordance with current ideas of those times, how is the fact, that no Indian work dealing with astronomy, the Geography of India or human anatomy gives accurate information on these subjects, to be accounted for? Does it mean that writers on these subjects did not care to obtain correct knowledge, by the practice of Yoga, or by consulting Yogis, or that Yogis did not care to read works on these subjects and correct wrong notions? Or is the claim of Yoga to Clairvoyance questionable?

Hindu Pundits have been wrangling over many controversial matters such as the real nature of विदोष—कफ, वात, पित्त,—the true zero degree of the ecliptic according to Hindu astronomical works (whether it coincides with Zeta Piscium or some other star) etc. Now if Yoga confers occult powers, will some Yogi come forward and give correct information regarding the above mentioned matters to the satisfaction of all parties concerned and thus give a practical demonstration of the occult powers that are alleged to result from the practice of Yoga?

THE PURPOSE OF LIFE

By **RAMESHWAR PRASAD GUPTA**

I HAVE set out to know the purpose of this life. To many it may appear a presumption on my part to express an opinion of my own on this particular subject when, once for all, the purpose of man's life has been fixed by the old 'Rishis'—and other ancient religious prophets of the world. But the fact is that the supernatural or divine notions about 'man' and the 'cosmos' have been proved utterly unfounded and wrong by the modern positive sciences which are based upon clear experimental evidences; and as such I have begun to have doubts—and very serious ones—in the wisdom of harping on the old chords, especially when such harping has resulted in meanness and hypocrisy and rendered us unable to cope harmoniously with the new situations and the changing phenomena.

Now in the light of knowledge (experimental and positive) acquired by man so far, let us examine the purpose or aim of man's life as set or formulated by the 'ancients.' Together with looking at individual man's purpose of life, let us also incidentally examine if according to the ancients the universe in itself has any purpose or not. In the theologies of the Semetic religions nothing about this has been clearly mentioned except that God created this universe to manifest Himself, His powers and virtues. This universe exists for no other purpose but for the manifestation of His powers and will through it. And how did He create it? Simply, He said Let there be creation—and there was creation. Man in this creation was to pass his life honestly and 'religiously', so that after his death, from the day of judgment (which will come some day) he might live in 'eternal paradise.' So the purpose of creation is simply to show God's power and will—an egoistic God indeed;—and the purpose of life is, that a man should pass his life honestly and religiously (according to their religious precepts) so that after the day of judgment he might attain 'eternal paradise.' I have absolutely nothing to say against this, only if a man's honesty and religiousness

would let him accept new facts and new truths which are being discovered from day to day. And now—not to talk of the test of modern experimental and positive science, the aforesaid story of creation, of 'paradise' and 'hell,' does not today even stand the test of common sense and ordinary reason. The whole theological conception of this 'cosmos,' and together with it the conception of divine or supernatural ordering of rewards and punishments totters down at the impact of every advance in science and 'mental make up.' And in fact there are now few Christians who really believe in this theological story of 'creation,' 'paradise' and 'hell.' So if you wish, let honest and religious living be the aim and purpose of your life, but let not this honesty and religiosity be an excuse for ignorance by shutting your spirit from the light of science and the delight that this light gives in the right probing into the mystery of life and the universe. And one thing more—are you really satisfied with 'honest and religious conduct' as the purpose of life? Does the 'terror of hell' and the 'temptation' of 'heaven' actually inspire you to honest conduct? And do you really believe that this 'terror and temptation' has and would inspire man to such conduct? Just see, if you are true to yourself.

Now let us turn to Hindu philosophy and religion and see what they say about the purpose of the universe and man's life. The representative Hindu philosophy is that of Shankara's Vedantism. And I do not see anything in this philosophy that sets forth that there is some purpose attached to this universe. According to this philosophy there is nothing that pervades this universe except the 'Brahma,' and all the phenomenal world that we see is merely a hallucination (*Maya*). This universe—as Brahma in itself, could have absolutely no purpose. For if you were to try to attach any 'purpose' to this Brahma, that would mean the very negation of 'Brahma'. The Brahma being an absolute entity—an abstraction in itself could have no purpose attached to it—it

is not its property. Now if for a moment, forgetting this concept of Brahma, we were to look at the phenomenal universe (the universe that we see and sense), we shall find that according to this philosophy, the phenomenal world too could have no purpose. What purpose could a hallucination have? The universe as well as the Brahma, are purposeless! As mentioned above, the Brahma pervades the universe, and this phenomenal world is a Maya. In this phenomenal world there are 'individual souls' (?) too, clothed in Maya. These individual souls are to free themselves from Maya and rediscover their oneness with Brahma. So evidently a man's purpose in life, as set here, turns to be, to realise his real 'self' which is the Brahma. Let us examine this.

Leaving aside different philosophical opinions on this question let us look at it from a commonsense point of view. Will you make your start in life by assuming this hard world and its objects as all unrealities? When I am eating mangoes and taking milk, if you were to come and say that milk and the mangoes are illusions, I would simply laugh you out of court. Everybody living would do so. As long as you live and move in this world, the hard realities of the world and its objects you can't do away with. Your aim is to realise your 'real self' and its oneness with Brahma. How would you know thyself and rediscover your unity with Brahma? By renunciation, knowledge and contemplation. Are you doing so? One thing you must remember: "If you have an aim and yet can never reach it, then it is no aim at all." How many out of trillions and trillions of human beings in thousands and thousands of years have realised their 'self' and their oneness with Brahma? Tell me. And then you are going to achieve this unproved aim by renunciation. How many today are renouncing the nature of their hearts—their loves and jealousies, their sympathies and hatreds, and finding joy therein? By knowledge. Knowledge of what? Certainly not the outside world and nature—that being merely an illusion. The knowledge of 'the self'—How would you gain it? By contemplation of the 'self'—the inner being. Let me add—the undefinable. By the contemplation of such a being you think you are going away

from illusion to reality, but just wait and see, if you aren't in fact going away from reality to illusion. By withdrawing yourself from the world and your life in the world, and narrowing yourself down to your so-called 'inner being,' you are in fact withdrawing from 'real' life itself, and plunging into an easy, blissful (?) abyss of ignorance. If at all you can know the mystery of life, you can do so by having a deep plunge into it, never by avoiding it. The right way to real knowledge is through sense perception of objects, not through passive contemplation or even intuition which is ultimately always a result of some prejudice. This is the question of the realization of 'self' and 'Brahma' looked at by ordinary commonsense. Now let us examine this question and Shankara's philosophy in general from a philosophical (scientific) point of view.

Shri Shankaracharya's philosophy is the doctrine of monism—that there exists nothing except the one Brahma which is absolute, formless, attributeless—the one unitary being. If there is only one absolute, formless being, then what about this world which has form and attributes? Shankara saves his 'monism' by assuming this visible universe to be simply an 'illusion,' a 'maya.' In order to establish the reality of his absolute 'Brahma,' the perceptible and qualitative existence (the world) had to be declared a 'hallucination,' a Maya. Even assuming that this perceptible world is Maya, the question remains: wherefrom doth proceed this 'Maya' whose 'appearance' at least we can't deny? Shankaracharya answers that this Maya proceeds from Brahma by a power called 'Avidya.' This avidya causes all the appearances of the world. This Brahma is associated with Maya as a 'Sakti' (power). As soon as we associate Brahma with 'Sakti' or a power called 'Avidya,' the whole conception of Brahma as an 'absolute entity' falls down. So either declare 'Brahma' as a being with form and attributes though in appearance alone, (which is against the very fundamental of the conception of Brahma) or admit, that Maya which causes the 'appearances' of the world is completely a separate entity from Brahma. This admission would demolish the 'Advaita'—the monistic conception. And Shankara finding no way out on the ground of philosophy and reason falls back upon

the authority of religion and scriptures, and upon their authority dogmatically asserts that the metaphysical entity, the absolute Brahma—becomes a personal God and maintains a fictitious connection for causing the phenomenal world. So if we do not base our understanding upon the dogmas of religion it would be clear from the above discussion that either Shankara's absolute Brahma is fictitious—a creation of imagination, or, his conception of this phenomenal world as Maya (illusion) is absolutely unfounded and wrong. To be more explanatory, two things are clear.

1. If the conception of Brahma as an 'absolute unitary being' is correct, his notion of this phenomenal world as Maya and Brahma is wrong; that is, the origin and basis of this phenomenal world is definitely not the Brahma. It has absolutely another origin and basis and as such it is another entity as real as Brahma to be dealt with. Now the purpose of your life is to rediscover your oneness with Brahma. You can rediscover your oneness with Brahma if you are Brahma alone; but with your body, your mind, your attributes, and qualities (though they may be regarded as mere appearances), you are a part of this phenomenal world too, and as such how can you be one with Brahma, when you are not Brahma alone?

2. If the conception of this phenomenal world as 'Maya' of Brahma is correct, then the notion of 'Brahma' as an absolute unitary being falls down—the absolute, attributeless Brahma becomes fictitious, merely a creation of the imagination. And again if your purpose of life is to discover oneness with Brahma, are you not making a futile attempt to discover a 'Being' which is only fictitious and imaginary?

There are other purposes of life talked of most often by men in general. They say, the purpose of this life is to reach God, to attain 'Moksha' (deliverance). Let us examine these things. If reaching God means becoming one with 'the absolute Brahma', it does not need any further refutation. It has just been dealt with. If reaching God means 'Moksha'; we are taking up this question in the following lines. For Vedantists 'moksha' means rediscovering oneness with Brahma, a question already considered. One word more about it. 'Death' in this world religiously means the extinction of the

body, but the survival of 'something' (call it 'Jiva' or 'Atma'), and its re-appearance in the world. So such a death literally is not complete death. If that 'something', which survives bodily extinction, attains deliverance and is lost in the 'Brahma,' nothing is left to enjoy bliss or happiness; it would certainly mean complete death, the extinction of the body as well as the extinction of the Jiva or Soul which is in the body. Would you like such total annihilation?

Moksha for the Jains means reaching the 'Salvation Rock' in Shivapuri, and living there eternally in silence and peace. They believe that their 'Tirthankara' like Parshvanath and Mahavir have attained Moksha. They are now Ishwaras (Gods), and are living in eternal silence and peace on the Salvation Rock. I simply bewail their fate! Just conceive of Mahavir and others living in utter nakedness and loneliness, doing nothing—thinking nothing!

Moksha for the 'Vaishnavites' means reaching the 'Vaikunth' (the abode of God Vishnu) and there living in the eternal company of their Lord or Beloved Vishnu, enjoying all delicacies and comforts of woman, wealth and dishes. Is such a Vaikunth essentially (except in period of time) different from the material comforts of the present world? Moksha for the 'Aryasamajists' means a very different thing. They believe in the eternity of three things: God, Nature and the Soul (Jiva). In the state of deliverance the 'Jiva', shorn of its many bodily and physical attributes, and yet retaining the power of feeling, senses and thought, (Jiva made more abstract and spiritual) roams freely in the Omnipresent and all-joyful God or Brahma. The 'Jiva' is not lost in the Brahma, (as in the case of the deliverance of the Vedantists) since in that case it would not be possible for him to enjoy 'bliss' and 'peace'; and so it maintains its separate entity, and roaming freely in the Brahma enjoys happiness and peace. After thus roaming free for about millions of years he returns to re-take its birth as a human being in this world, and again to begin its circle of life and death. It is only a well-thought and well-guarded wordy explanation of deliverance to meet common objections raised against the explanations of deliverance given by the other sects.

MANIFESTO

Issued by

Writers' Committee, The Indian People's Theatre Association

FASCISM in its strident march has reached the shores of our homeland. Behind the advancing armies of this the greatest evil force the world has ever seen, there trails a path strewn with the remains of millions of freedom-loving men and women with the shattered ruins of what were once centres of culture and with the wreckage of human liberty. From the Pacific to the Atlantic nation after nation, country after country has fallen under this force of evil. They are waiting at our threshold watching for a suitable hour to strike.

We who have toiled and fought for our freedom shall pay no heed to the poisonous counsel of Fascist agents that they are world-liberators. The path they have trodden in China and in Europe is the very antithesis of national liberty. **WE SHALL AND MUST FIGHT THIS AGGRESSOR. NEUTRALITY IS A FATAL DREAM.**

Against the array of Fascist forces and their glistening steel there stand the indomitable people of China, the great Soviet Union and Britain and America. All the progressive forces of the world are on this side. True it is that in this people's camp of human progress there are forces which represent a dying and decadent Imperialism. True it is that we, the people of India, are prevented by such imperialist elements from playing our historic role in full. But the path to progress, our path to a free India in a free world, lies in the recognition of the fact that the dominating forces in this people's camp are the revolutionary might of U.S.S.R., the invincible national liberatory zeal of China and of the many European peoples under Nazi rule, and the progressive forces in Britain and America. These forces in their growing resistance to Fascist aggression are slowly but surely pushing back the vacillating imperialist forces. It is only by ranging ourselves on the side of these progressive forces, by rousing and organising our people's will to resist Fascist aggression in the people's own way, by striving for a people's strategy in a people's war that we shall succeed in eliminating Imperialism from the people's camp, defeat the Fascist aggressor, and march forward towards freedom. The alternative is the

fate of Malaya, the servile acceptance of one master in the place of another, and the defeat of all the progressive forces of the world who are our allies in our struggle for freedom.

Imperialism which still dominates over our country cannot and will not mobilise the entire resources of our people against Fascism, and for national defence. Our contribution to the anti-Fascist struggle therefore demands that we shall not be the camp followers of Imperialism or a pawn in its hands, but we shall rely on the initiative and consciousness of our people. We stand for our freedom, but our freedom is only possible in a free world.

This is the testing time for all progressive forces. A mere ideological opposition to Fascism in general is an escape from the field of action. Determined action here and now against Fascist aggression is the touchstone on which the sincerity of our profession, that we stand for a free India in a free world, shall be judged. Action and thought should be of the same pattern.

It is the duty of all men concerned with the progress of culture, above all of writers, artists, and poets to make our people realise the vast and epoch-making issues involved in this great struggle. It is our task to make our art live and breathe of the hopes of millions of men and women caught in this titanic conflict, and to make our people play their due part in it. It is our task to create in our people the will to resist, to help them to be cool and disciplined in the face of danger and disaster. Our art can have no compromise with Fascism, it shall not succumb to defeatism. It shall be a fighting weapon in the cause of preserving a democratic culture. It shall concretely show what Fascism has done and will do in its advance. It shall portray in human terms the lives of soldiers, sailors, guerillas, workers and peasants of all nations, including our own, who by their simple heroism and determined resistance are breaking down the might of Imperialism and Fascism. It shall struggle for a higher cultural consciousness among the masses. It shall cease to be a luxury of the rich. It shall participate in the national crusade against illiteracy, ignorance, decadent social institutions and communal animosities.

that keep men apart. IN SHORT, ART SHALL BECOME CONSCIOUS OF ITS PURPOSE AND ORGANISED IN ITS ENDEAVOUR.

The recent history of China is an eloquent sermon of what stupendous achievements art can claim when it is conscious in its purpose and organised in its endeavour.

Even before the Manchurian invasion of 1931 Chinese writers had organised themselves for a united front of literature for democratic revolution and national defence.

They organised "literary propaganda brigades" and called out the slogan "Dramatics for national defence."

In the past our various national literateurs have striven to portray those feelings and aspirations aching for expression in the hearts of the Indian people. Great literary figures like Tagore have devoted their talents for the cause of national freedom and international peace and justice. In this hour of crisis we have got to carry forward this tradition on to a higher plane of conscious, organised action. We should consider ourselves participants in this struggle. Our art should be a weapon in our hands. The greatest need for organisation and discipline is in the contents of our art. We should not seek to provide fantasies as an escape from the realities of the present struggle. We should not devote our time and our talents to an abstract presentation of social problems isolated from the greatest struggle in human history, which is affecting and modifying every such problem. All problems should be seen and studied in their movement and development in the context of this struggle.

Only when the contents of our work are based on such a study, only when such a discipline guides our efforts shall our art become a weapon in our hands. A new discipline is also necessary, in the forms of our artistic expression.

It is the people we seek and our forms must be determined by this factor. Directness of approach, simplicity of language, must be our motto. Lastly we should seek to co-ordinate our endeavours through the establishment of an organisation of artists.

We appeal to all those who agree with us in what has been said above to come together in a national conference to discuss and decide how best we can fulfil our role

in this present crisis. To do this we must issue this manifesto. All those who are willing to sign this manifesto please send in their names with suggestions of their own to :

Secretary of the Writers' Group

Indian People's Theatre Assn:

C/o. Saco Corporation, People's Building,
Pherozechah Mehta Road, Bombay.

CHINESE WRITERS AND NATIONAL DEFENCE

In that eventful year of 1932 Japanese Fascism fired the first shot of that brutal war which reaction has since waged against culture.

Peiking! Shanghai! Nanking! Tientstin!

The ancient universities of these cities lay in ruins. Whole libraries representing the written wisdom of ages were turned to ashes. Conservatories of music were turned into barracks.

The wounded soul of China called to the nations of the world for help. Her artists, the inheritors of the civilisation which gave the art of printing to the world, did not bow before this insolent might. They marched with their retreating peoples and armies determined to meet this ruthless "War on Art" with their inspiring motto "Art against War."

The horrible reality of Fascist totalitarian invasion convinced every Chinese artist that those who want freedom of artistic expression must first struggle for a free China.

To the creative Chinese artist national defence became synonymous with the defence of culture itself and the intellectual and spiritual freedom, without which a progressive culture is as a plant without light.

In 1930 Chinese writers and artists organised a united front of literature for national defence. Their themes were no longer of traditional legends and fables, or of the mystical and the romantic, but of the fatal consequences of surrender to the invader, of the supreme urgency for eradication of all social evils, ignorance, fatalism and superstition inherited from decadent and feudal traditions, which hamper a nation's unity and strength.

They wrote of the heroic and stirring episodes of the people's resistance to Fascist invasion. Of the countless unknown soldiers, artisans and peasants who made with their living bodies the great New Wall of China. Not only were their themes changed, but even their artistic forms of

expression were refashioned to express this new world.

In the field of poetry there appeared declamatory poems, designed for the mass meetings, often recited by the poet himself. Poems for the Market Place, usually in folk-lore style, simple in form and rhythm, posted on street walls, and wall newspapers, for the man in the street to read and recite. And lastly poems cast in the form of the ancient folk-lore epics.

A whole nation became poetry conscious, a new kind of poetry—the people's poetry. "The North-West Partisans" an epic poem of the indomitable exploits of the north-west guerillas is now sung in every hut and camp throughout China.

In the field of prose there appeared, besides short stories, a new and living literary journalism—the reportage sketch, which gives a vivid narrative of the manifold events and personalities which go to make new China.

The creative energy of a nation in the throes of regeneration found expression in thousands of plays and dramas being enacted by student groups, trained in the Gorky School, and other centres, for the peasants and workers.

Mao Tun, Ting Ling (a woman), and Fa Chin are names which stand out in modern Chinese literature. They belong to the great group of writers, Romain Rolland, Maxim Gorky, Christopher Caudwell, Ralph Fox, who with their powerful pens have served history. They encouraged and organised the spread of culture in the form of wall newspapers, posters, exhibitions, mass education, singing and theatricals. All these forms of art had one main basic idea—the defence of democracy and the revolution.

In music there are the works of Hsi Hsu Hai, "whose melodies and operas are sung from the Yellow River to the Yellow Sea." Edgar Snow hearing his symphony "Yellow River" for the first time says ".....What I heard was good. It lived, it spoke, it held its audience entranced.....yet despite the strong borrowing from the West it remained China—but the China of to-morrow, with its hall door open to the West." Songs of liberty are more popular in China than the most sensational "hit" in London or New York. The march of the Volunteers, for instance, is sung in a dozen dialects every day.

Chinese writers have founded the Society for Mass Literature, which issued 300 pamphlets in simplified characters and editions of these ran upto 1,000,000 at a few cents a piece.

They encouraged the Latin Hua (Chinese alphabetical script of 28 letters). This is not regarded as rival to the old characters but as a substitute for the old characters till the student had learnt them with the help of the latinised phonetics.

The Chinese writer of to-day lives and fights with the armies and partisans. During the first two months of conflict literary activity was increased, particularly as regards the organisation of the "Literary Propaganda Brigades." These brigades toured the whole countryside educating villages and opening up cultural centres in the hinterland.

The Chinese writer to-day is with the soldiers on the field of battle, with the half-bent peasant tilling the soil and the industrial worker in the factories. The Chinese writer has come to love and appreciate this living contact with his people. He has none of the pangs of the artist who isolates himself and looks at the world as a mere spectator.

The recognition of the interdependence of art and society has been an old concept in Chinese philosophy, though soon after the Republic the imported idea from the West, "L'art pour l'art" gained ground for a time, the exigencies of war, however, made the Chinese writer revert back to the old concept. He squares "art with life and life with art" and in this lies the source of his democratic art and the new culture of China.

(Continued from page 97)

From the aforesaid different conceptions of 'Moksha,' each claiming to be absolutely true, one thing at least is quite evident, that the 'Moksha' is not a truth or reality, since, were it so, there would have been only one definite end or explanation of Moksha. Moreover these conceptions of 'Moksha' are not based upon any philosophical reasoning. They are simply imaginative hits made to explain the unprovable, and are held merely on the authority of theology and religion. Let us see if this conception of God and 'Moksha' stands the test of philosophy and science.

(To be concluded)

See thou, then, to what damned
deeds religion urges men.

—Lucretius.

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The writers of the articles in this journal are themselves responsible for the views expressed and do not implicate the Rationalist Association of India in any way.

We invite contributions of not more than 1,500 words on topics of interest to rationalist. They should be type-written. If not published they will not be returned unless stamps are enclosed. Matter for publication should reach the Editor on or before the 23rd.

All contributions, correspondence, press cuttings, journals in exchange, enquiries regarding advertisement rates, etc., should be addressed to Mr. Abraham Solomon, Asstt. Editor, "REASON" 59, Karmani Building, Arthur Road, Bombay, 11.

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CONTENTS

Students and Rationalism by Nissim Ezekiel	102
Psychology of a Bachelider by R. D. Karve	103
The Purpose of Life by Rameshwar Prasad Gupta	105
Reviews	108
An Open Letter to Mahatma Gandhi by Swami Dharma Theertha	109
Law and Theory in Science by D. D. Karve	111
Ancestor-Worship and the Indian Social Reformer by M. A. Pai	113
Islam in the Light of Modern Knowledge by Atib Usmani	116

ANNOUNCEMENT

We regret to announce that we have been compelled to suspend the publication of *Reason* and also the activities of the R.A.I. for the duration of the war. The cost of publishing *Reason* has increased threefold and is still increasing. Since August, the disturbances in the city, the grave war situation at that time and several other difficulties made it impossible for those who were attending to R.A.I. work in their spare time to continue doing so. It was thought at that time that it would be possible to make some arrangements but unfortunately this could not be done. Mr. Solomon was taken up for work elsewhere which left him no time to attend to the publication of *Reason* or the R.A.I. office. Much correspondence has therefore remained unattended to.

We therefore express our regret for the great inconvenience that members of the R.A.I. and readers of *Reason* have been put to.

The Annual Report and Statement of Accounts will be sent to members as soon as possible.

The essential thing in education is not the doctrine taught, but the arousing of the faculties.

Ernest Raman.

It requires no great courage to champion either an established institution, or a movement that is making headway. The value of a man is to be gauged by the number of forlorn causes he champions. There is heroism in isolation.

Chapman Cohen.

STUDENTS AND RATIONALISM

By **NISSIM EZEKIEL**

THE time is now ripe when rationalism can make its presence felt to the students of this country. I have spent two years in a Bombay College. I have spent a few months in a college hostel, which has increased my acquaintance with the working of the students' minds. It is my firm opinion that religion has ceased to hold as important a place in their lives as it once did. The religious scriptures are being systematically ignored. Muslim students certainly do not read the Koran. Dozens of my Hindu friends have not even heard of the Upanishads. Parsis perhaps know less of their religion than any other community and the outlook seems a hopeful one.

But there is a snag which we cannot ignore. In most cases where religious superstitions have been pushed away, it has been largely a matter of convenience. Students are simply not to be bothered, they have not the time, they do not care to accompany their parents to a house of worship, not because they think it useless to mutter prayers in a language which they cannot understand, but because they "simply must" see the latest from Hollywood. There is no intelligent rejection of that which is antiquated and meaningless. Where the religious ideal is absent, there is no ideal at all. We cannot be jubilant if students are indifferent to religion because they are also indifferent to literature, art and "whatsoever things are noble and of good report." It is essential that the student must be helped to plant fresh ideals where the old have crumbled. This is the task of rationalism in India as far as students are concerned.

If you place a copy of "Reason" every month in the hands of every student in India, it will not make them rationalists. The intellectual standard of the articles is too high; the topics discussed are beyond them. Suppose I have read, been taught and believe the New Testament. If you systematically prove that some parts are false, you will probably shock me and temporarily antagonise my sympathies. But provided I have understood you, your attack is bound to shake my serene attitude

and make me question everything I read in the New Testament. But if I have never read the New Testament, probably never heard of it and am not likely ever to read it, then your attack becomes irrelevant. My Passive acceptance of a creed to which I belong by the accident of birth, cannot be changed to active rejection merely by attacking that part of religion of which I know nothing.

That constitutes the core of the difficulty that will confront the rationalist approach to students. There is the danger that exposure of religious superstition, will produce a powerful reaction in favour of religion, since students, aware that their religion is attacked will spend some time in finding out what it is that has been attacked. There is too much danger that such attacks will not only be ineffective but will defeat their own purpose. Highly scholastic arguments will serve no useful purpose. What is necessary in the first place is to comb the colleges and enlist the support of genuine talent. Furthermore examples from every-day life must be chosen whenever it is felt necessary to expose some religious superstition. It would be ideal for example to concentrate on the religious festivals.

What I am trying to stress is, that the approach to students will have to be simple and more delicate. The implications of the scientific attitude must be emphasised. Our students are easily led (or misled) especially by people of standing who play upon their religious or national prejudices. There is a surprisingly passive acceptance of catch-words and slogans. During the recent congress movement, the bulletins distributed contained special instructions (they were vogue and meaningless) for students. Such as "Organise the villages" "Do not attend classes" and "Educate public in Health and Hygiene." Yet they were distributed with great enthusiasm and students seemed to feel that something was "being done." I will not give further instances of this doleful story. I am sure that rationalism alone can create the critical attitude which

(Please turn to page 122)

PSYCHOLOGY OF A BACKSLIDER

By R. D. KARVE

A CORRESPONDENT sends me an interesting cutting from the Indian Social Reformer of the 28th February last, in which the Editor, Mr. Natarajan, gives "Some Reminiscences" referring to the Hindu superstition that it is inauspicious to encounter a widow, which is now fast dying out, except perhaps in villages. In the olden days, it was very easy to recognize a widow, perhaps I must say a Brahman widow, because for one thing she was shaved, though one end of her sari was used to cover the ugly sight, and she was obliged to wear only red (in the South, I am told, it is white). The curious may note that in the West, widows' weeds are supposed to be black, while in India, for Brahman widows and those of some other castes by imitation, black or any colour approaching it is prohibited. Of course modern widows neither shave nor observe these colour bars, so that even if an orthodox Brahman wanted to avoid widows, he would find it difficult to recognize them. Of course even now, with a few exceptions, widows do not wear the "Kunkuma" spot on the forehead, but modern girls and wives are sometimes found to omit it too, so that nobody would be definitely able to recognize a widow by her appearance. The "Kunkuma" custom is a very curious one. It is worn by girls even before marriage and they continue to wear it after marriage, so that it does not seem to have anything to do with a husband. And still it is prohibited to widows. One wonders why. Perhaps because it is regarded as auspicious and a widow is by nature inauspicious.

In connection with this superstition, Mr. Natarajan mentions a friend of his, one Ramaswami, who protested against this custom of avoiding widows by purposely seeking encounters with widows. He used to post his son at his door and ask him to notify him as soon as a widow was visible at a distance, so that he could meet her when he started for his office, of course with no other intentions except to demonstrate that he did not think it inauspicious.

Mr. Natarajan describes his friend as an aggressive atheist who used to distribute

tracts by Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant right and left, and, as a pillar of the local Prarthana Samaj, takes a delight in recounting how his atheistic friend was discomfited on a particular occasion, with the implication that it is quite natural for atheists to be nonplussed. It appears that this aggressive atheist once gave some tracts to the late G. Subrahmanya Aiyar, the then editor of the Hindu, and the latter, without looking at the tract, asked, "What does this tract say?", to which Ramaswami replied, "It proves definitely, Sir, that there is no God." Mr. Aiyar looked at him quizzically and said, "Suppose there is no God, what then?" To this apparently, there was no reply, and he mumbled "Nothing", and Mr. Natarajan says that he never understood the meaning of "flabbergasted" so well as from the look on Ramaswami's face. He opines that "It was a fine display of intellectual ju-jitsu" and adds that "Ramaswami did not distribute any more of his tracts that day. Later, he became an intensely orthodox Hindu." Rather a sad end, one must say, for an "aggressive atheist!"

It is not possible, however, to agree with Mr. Natarajan about the fine display of intellectual ju-jitsu. This aggressive atheist had evidently not acquired even the elements of atheism, and I do not see what *kudos* can accrue to Mr. Subrahmanya Aiyar from a verbal victory over an opponent of that calibre, who did not even know that it is not possible to "prove definitely that there is no God". One can understand Mr. Natarajan's chuckles of derision at the easy defeat of a so-called atheist, the shallowness of whose convictions is seen from the fact that this retort was enough to turn him into an orthodox Hindu. Mr. Natarajan should know, however, that it is not every atheist who can be dealt with in that way. His friend only proved that aggressiveness is no indication of sound convictions or the ability to argue. It does not necessarily take a Bradlaugh to give a fitting reply to the question "What then?", which seemed to defeat Mr. Ramaswami so ignominiously. The consequences that would follow the admission that there is no God

are perfectly obvious to every sensible atheist. If there is no God, all the religions based on God are so much rubbish, all morality based on the fear of God goes to the scrap-heap, all the time and space and money wasted on temples and prayers and what not could be utilized towards human betterment. Are these not important consequences and was it not great cheek on the part of Subramanya Aiyar to ask "What then?" One can only pity the man who could be flabbergasted at that silly question and who could relapse into orthodoxy for such a flimsy excuse. One can only infer that he had never really lost his orthodoxy and that his aggressiveness was merely superficial. One wonders if he began to consider widows inauspicious again after this tragedy.

This same aggressive atheist and reformer apparently attempted to reclaim "fallen women" and devadasis and had interviews with them in order to argue them out of their profession. He found it difficult to make them believe that he was not a customer and that he had come merely to argue with them. He had the usual experience of these overzealous reformers, that even if you find a job for such women, they can never stick to it and will invariably run away. They acquire the habit of getting money enough for their needs and sometimes even to live luxuriously at very little cost and this makes them for ever unfit to do hard work. But it is amusing to notice that he met his match in argument even among prostitutes and that a Subrahmanya Aiyar was not really needed to beat him. It seems that one of the Devadasis he visited actually "turned the tables on him". He told Mr. Natarajan that "The lady was very polite and courteous. But she could not see any difference between a lawyer—she had asked him what his profession was—pleading for a client who engaged him for a fee and a woman who was brought up to give her favours to a client on the same footing. In the one case it was the brains which were hired, in the other it was the body. Was the body more important in the scale of creation than the mind—the flesh more important than the spirit?" It is a sound argument and I have often given it myself on behalf of prostitutes. Why are they to be considered "fallen women" if pleaders are not "fallen men"?

After this, Ramaswami gave up trying to save these souls from perdition. All this shows Ramaswami to have been an extremely superficial man with violent enthusiasms based on insufficient grounds and convictions which had never gone very deep. Is it any wonder that such a man finds himself nonplussed at every point? He assumed that prostitutes are fallen women and tried to rescue them, as many people are trying to do even now in Bombay. Of course it goes without saying that no woman should be forced by circumstances beyond her control to follow a profession for which she has no taste and it is quite right to try to help her. Only such women can ever be 'saved', not those to whom it has become a habit.

These Social Purity workers will find it difficult to explain their prejudice against prostitution except by the *a priori* assumption that prostitution is bad. Some people may say perhaps that sex intercourse should not take place where there is no love. A little consideration will show that that argument will not hold water. Are not marriages very often arranged for money considerations, or considerations other than love? How are these any better than prostitution? But they are found in the highest ranks, perhaps more in the higher ranks than in the lower. Who will dare to compare these Society ladies to prostitutes? But the consideration is the same in both cases. Nay in some respects these ladies are more to be pitied than prostitutes. Where divorce is not allowed, theirs is a life-long misery, while prostitutes can very often choose their customers and have no lord and master who can order them about as married ladies have.

All this has to be considered before one goes in for so-called social work. Mere aggressiveness will naturally lead to disaster whether with respect to atheism or anything else.

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THE PURPOSE OF LIFE

By **RAMESHWAR PRASAD GUPTA**

(Continued from page 100)

We shall once more turn to Shankara's 'advaita' considered in another light, and the whole spiritualistic stand taken by many a philosopher, because all this belief in 'Moksha', 'God', 'soul' (or 'Supersoul', 'Brahma, the Mukta, Ishwar), is spiritualistic in one form or another. We shall examine the whole spiritualistic philosophy and conception of the universe. We shall not enter into any long discussion or details, because this is not a place for that, but, we shall simply mention the spiritualistic point of view and as against it the findings of provable knowledge acquired by man so far—and then draw our own conclusions. The last word on, or the most developed form of spiritualistic conception, western as well as eastern, is 'spiritualistic Monism.' The substratum, the essence, or the first principle of the universe is immaterial 'spirit,' the Brahma. (Berkley and Shankara). Spiritualistic monism is a very highly developed form of pantheism. And 'Pantheism is only inverted Materialism,' since, as soon as spiritualistic monism tries to explain the phenomenal world (whose existence can't be denied) as merely an 'idea', 'image' or 'maya,' the immaterial spirit falls to the ground and its place is taken up by 'matter.' The final substratum, the one essence, the first principle is proved to be a material substance. Spiritualistic monism becomes materialistic monism. This stand of the materialists that the substratum of the universe, of everything, body, mind and life, is a material substance, and that the world exists objectively and by itself, is not unfounded and unproved. The modern scientific discoveries have established this principle of materialism beyond any shade of doubt. The Question naturally arises: How can matter perceive, think and reason? How can matter be the origin and substance of mind? For explanation you need to read the works of physiologists. They have experimentally shown that mind is nothing but

'brain,' which is a particular organization of matter, a part of body. We cannot conceive of a 'mind' thinking and reasoning, apart from our animal body. "The ideas and actions of the understanding are motional phenomena of the central nervous system." Next we turn to the question of life. How did life originate from matter? How is the idea of life compatible with matter? The theory of evolution comes to explain it. The wonderfully complex organism like man is a descendant of an ape-like animal, who in turn is remotely descended from simplet and yet simplet organisms—till we reach a single cellular organism—and even simpler forms of life like 'bacteriophage.' Now at the end the question still remains wherefrom did life come even in that 'bacteriophage'? and so on. Though scientists have not yet been able to trace the exact origin of life, yet their day to day experiments and discoveries are narrowing down all differences between organic and inorganic substances. Even the discoveries of Sir J. C. Bose have led to the unity of all organic and inorganic substances, and have pointed to the fact that the metal, the vegetable, and the animal are in essence one. A living organism is nothing but a particular, highly complex organism of physico—chemical substances, at a very high level of evolution in nature. Man and together with him his mind have taken millions of years to have evolved from matter, and the phenomena of man and mind may be regarded as of comparatively recent appearance. Prior to them existed matter for trillions and trillions of years without any consciousness, and yet working since ever according to some definite mechanical laws, which are true even today and shall be true for ever. And as such we can see that there was no intelligent purpose in the universe, neither is there such a one even at present (unless of course man having controlled nature, imposes a certain purpose upon it

out of his own conscious thought). One must not be misled as to this materialistic monism and the working of definite mechanical laws by the recent discoveries of 'electrons' and the so called 'waves of energy' as the only all-pervasive substance of the universe, to thinking that this 'waves of energy' is something immaterial, that this is some spiritual phenomenon. It has been conclusively demonstrated by the more recent discoveries that the universal phenomena cannot be conceived in terms of energy without the presupposition of a mass, however fine that might be. Electrical particles, particles of energy are material entities. It has been demonstrated experimentally that not only can matter be converted into energy, but energy also can be converted into matter. This re-establishes the monistic view of the universe with a material substance as its substratum, which is always moving according to definite laws, which it is the task of man to discover and thus increase and perfect his knowledge about the 'universe' (For fuller understanding of these things one must see some works of Science and modern philosophy). This materialistic concept is not merely a hypothesis created out of abstract thought or sung out of intuition, but it is a scientifically verified and still verifiable principle. And in its light, if one has the honesty to clear his mind of all old prejudices, one shall see falling and fading away the spiritualistic monism of the West and the East, the dualistic conception of mind and matter (Ishwara and Prakrati), and Dayanand's trinity of Ishwara, Jiva, and Prakrati (God, soul and nature). And as such the conceptions of attaining moksha, and realization of God also dwindle away. Moksha and God begin to be revealed in their true light as merely the creations of man's imagination. Matter or the (objective) universe becomes the 'reality,' and God or Brahma becomes the 'illusion.' And if one has the insight to see, one shall observe that the Vedic or Dayanandi conception of Ishwara or Brahma as a formless, fine, law-abiding 'Being', all-pervading and all-powerful, comes to mean nothing but a very fine force or energy bound by its own laws and developing and manifesting itself by its own laws (materialistic monism); and discovering God comes

to mean discovering these laws that govern the universe or that are working in nature. Newton discovered one such law, Faraday another, and Darwin yet another, and thus a host of other scientists. Viewed in this light, the highest achievement of man's life comes to be nothing other than to have discovered yet one more law governing the universe, or to have revealed one more secret of nature. And again viewed in this light we can very well see that joy and freedom of spirit do not lie in breaking the bondage of the world and trying to attain Moksha or 'nirwana', which is merely a mirage, but this joy and freedom certainly lie in breaking the shackles of superstition and outgrown knowledge that bind the spirit, with the ever-growing knowledge of Science or philosophy (science and Philosophy essentially being not separate things now).

Now, when philosophical consequences of Science have given a more or less comprehensive view of life and universe, when practical consequences of science have improved the physical environment of man, it would not be futile if we apply the same scientific or objective view to man as living in society, with a view to improve him. Looking at man in this way let us try to see if we can fix any purpose for man's life.

It may once more be pointed out, that no purpose necessarily inheres in the universe. Humanity has been but a curious incident in this universe and its career a recent episode in cosmic history. Humanity as only a curious incident evolving from an unconscious matter does not necessarily inhere any set purpose, and so also with the individual. But it does not mean that man in a state of civilization cannot find any satisfying purpose in existence. He can. Let us see. Again, let us remember that man is not naturally a progressive animal. He shares the tendency of all other animal tribes just to pull through and reproduce his kind. Man can be made consciously progressive only by awakening in him through proper education, a consciousness that he should make progress. All men in whom no such consciousness is awakened will remain lethargic, just pulling through and reproducing their species. Right progress of an individual as an individual, in whom such consciousness has been awakened will be to set

himself on the path of the realisation of his own personality. Every man or woman has a certain inborn ability, a latent power and possibility, and he or she is to develop his or her innate ability or power to the utmost capacity in this very life and in this very world. Man and woman are to make the best of their inborn possibilities. They are to find out what they can best work at, and having found it out, to work at it. In development of one's special abilities and aptitudes, in their full use and free working, lies the fruition and joy of one's existence. The joy of the poet is in his poem, of the artist in his art, of the brave man in the putput of his courage, and of the wise man in the discernment of truths. In the unfoldment of personality is revealed the joy and purpose of life.

But man can't do it in aloofness from society. Society must provide him all opportunities, facilities, and liberty to make the best of his latent possibilities. Does modern society do so? Life in a modern state for most of us is really a problem of earning bread—dry or buttered. And as long as man has not got enough leisure, as long as most of his life's time and energy—continue to be taken up by the work of getting food to eat and clothes to wear, that is to say, as long as he spends all his time and energy in earning bread, so long there can rarely be any other purpose for him in life except to carry on the drudgery of earning bread till some day he silently passes away.

In the beginning I had set out to find what end in life a man should aim at. I think I have discussed the matter generally in a comprehensive manner, and have tried to establish the fictitious and illusive nature, and hence unattainability of all those ends of life which aim at pleasing or realizing God, or attaining Mukti, in short, which aim at "other-worldliness." At the same time in the light of mighty revelations of science and philosophy, I have tried to form a plausible and satisfying purpose of life in this very world. Before fixing any aim or purpose in your life, you shall have to decide between "this-worldliness" and "other-worldliness." And it is possible that in spite of what I have said against other-worldliness, your choice on account of old prejudices might fall in its favour. But if you decide for "other-worldliness,"

first make sure that you do not become a mean hypocrite by incessantly making an effort to prepare for peace and happiness of the other world or the next life, and yet secretly cherishing a mundane desire to enjoy the things and comforts of this world (things and comforts which bind your spirit). As soon as you find that you have a desire—how much so ever unexpressed and disliked—for things of this world (things that bind your spirit), give up your pretensions to other-worldliness, otherwise you shall be deceiving yourself and your High and noble God, losing both this world as well as the other.

The tragedy and the most degrading meanness of the Indian life lies in the fact that the so-called religious-minded Indians are all through pretending to be spiritual and yet cherishing a wish for comforts, riches, and wealth (things which are supposed to bind the spirit). This fact only points to the truth that in spite of their proclamations and pretensions otherwise, the Indian people are just as much concerned with the conditions of life in this world as any Westerners or the so-called "materialists"; but instead of realizing that they have to remain content with "simple life" due to their own weakness and inactivity, they try to conceal this weakness and inactivity, out of their self-deception, under the garb of high ideals of spirituality and religiousness.

And when I have said all, one thing still remains. I see a "beautiful" lotus flower looking out of the "blue" of water. My "mind" sees the inexorable law of nature working there—the unbroken chain of causation, from the seed to the plant, the plant to the bud, the bud to the full-blossomed flower—the flower to the fruit—the fruit to the seed—and thus the unbroken, regular, law-abiding circle ever going on. The beautiful lotus is there by itself, independent of any consciousness or feeling on my part towards it. This is one truth about the flower.

The beautiful lotus looking out of the "blue" of water then enters my heart. My heart is lightened, its heaviness droops down—it begins to leap with joy. I am transported to a plane, where I forget my poverty, I forget my pain—and nothing remains but joy. This is also a truth about the same flower. "The truth has its law,

(Please turn to page 110)

REVIEWS

The Last Years of a Great Educationist, compiled and edited by F. H. Hayward, D.Litt., M.A., B.Sc., and E. M. White, F. R. Hist. S., Pp. 293. (Copies can be had from Miss E. M. White, Westcroft, 87 Norton Road, Wembley, Middlesex, England). Price 6 Sh. post free.

This book bears the sub-title "A record of the work and thought of F. J. Gould from 1923 to 1938" and thus supplements Mr. Gould's Autobiography (*The Life Story of a Humanist*) which the author had brought up to 1923. A fine photograph is given as a Frontispiece and a list of about 70 pamphlets and 50 books is given at the beginning. The rest of the book consists mostly of extracts from letters written by him during this period to various people. To Rationalists, it may be of interest to note that though Mr. Gould was one of the founders of the Rationalist Press Association and an active propagandist on its behalf, he gradually grew dissatisfied with the methods of the Association, and though he never broke away from it, he had drifted away from it to such an extent that the authors are compelled to ask, "Was Gould really such a bore in his closing years, such a back number, such a mere relic of the past, that at the R. P. A. Annual Dinner held a few weeks after his death—the Dinner he had never failed to attend (except in 1930) from its first establishment in 1902—no mention was made of him?" (p. 9). His main complaint against the Association was that it had ceased to be a propagandist body and was being run as a business firm, and this is why at the end Gould had to do most of his publishing at his own expense. There is no doubt that Gould did much more propaganda work than the R. P. A. But it must be remembered that his friends were obliged to start a Gould Fund to support him, and that the R. P. A. contributed substantially to it to the end, and are responsible for more than half the annuity paid to his widow. It is a difficult question to answer, "Has anybody a right to look to one's friends for a living on the ground that one is doing propaganda work?" And it may not be always possible to find willing friends. However that question may be answered, there is no doubt that Gould did valuable educational work. He

had a peculiar aptitude for giving lessons and getting his pupils interested, as anybody who has seen him at work in India will be able to confirm. He was active to the end. His last Bulletin was issued in Feb. 1938 and he died on April 6th. His last letter was written on 21st March.

R. D. Karve.

"*Punjab Hindu Dharma-Sthāna Prabandhak Bill*," written and published by Shri Har Bhagawan, Secretary, Hindu Missionary Society, Krishnanagar, Lahore. Pp. 18.

This is a criticism of the Punjab Charitable and Religious Endowments Bill, which has been before the Punjab Assembly for some time and which its promoters are trying their best to get passed in the next session. The principal points of this criticism are that though this Bill pretends to have in view merely the correction of the mismanagement found at present in religious institutions such as temples and Maths, it is really intended to undermine the efforts of reformers, who during the past century have tried to get rid of caste distinctions and other disadvantages to which Hindus are subject. This follows from Clauses 6 & 10 of the Bill, of which the first lays down that if a person wants to be called a Sanatani, he must believe that the Vedas are entirely written by God, must consider himself bound by caste distinctions arising from birth, and also by the religious and spiritual truths laid down in the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Smritis and Puranas. The second clause lays down that only he is a Hindu who is a resident of Hindustan, who is not a Sikh, who is born in one of the Hindu castes, who reveres the cow, who calls himself a Hindu, and who does not believe in any foreign religion, such as Mahomedanism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism or Judaism. The author contends that the efforts of reformers have so far tended to remove caste distinctions and even to assimilate not only Buddhists, but even Sikhs.

Though the new Hindu Civil Marriage Bill to be put before the Central Legislature shortly is intended to apply to Hindus, Jains, Buddhists and Sikhs, and inter-marriages between any two of these, it can hardly be argued that Jains, Buddhists or

(Please turn to page 108)

AN OPEN LETTER TO MAHATMA GANDHI

Dear Mahatmaji :

No justification is required for the struggle to attain emancipation from political subjection. That we feel the necessity to justify it is in itself the symptom of a great weakness. But at the same time the soldiers of freedom should satisfy themselves that their hands are clean and their cause is just. This is necessary for the success of the struggle not only from a moral point of view but also in a practical sense, as final success must always depend on the elimination of the causes which brought about the nation's downfall and subjection. It is in this spirit that I write the following lines for your earnest consideration.

In a recent issue of the Harijan you wrote that in free India untouchability would be an offence. This was evidently meant as an encouraging assurance to the Harijans. The Muslims have lived in India for over a thousand years. They have reason to be proud of their own culture and achievements of the past no less than the Hindus. But their social position so far as Hindu society is concerned is no better than that of the Harijans. They are untouchables in every sense. How can you ever expect a self-respecting Muslim to submit to the rule of a Hindu majority so long as he has no hope of ever being able to live as a brother-citizen and good neighbour of the Hindus? The Muslims' vivisection from the Hindu starts from birth and is preserved till death in all spheres of life. This is true of the Christians and the other non-Hindus. To all of them, the Hindu is a complete foreigner, and Hindu rule would be a foreign rule in the deep sentiments of their heart. You may say that in free India the Government would be a joint rule of the Hindus and the Muslims. But how can it be more inspiring than a joint rule of India by the Indians and the British Imperialists? How can the weaker party ever feel pride or self-respect when they are eternally condemned to live in segregation from the stronger?

Among the Hindus themselves there has been some awakening in some parts of the country and in such places their opposition to Hindu domination of any

kind is becoming as strong as that of the Muslims. In addition to the Harijans there are thousands of other Hindus whose sympathies are with the Muslims because they feel that in Hindu society they cannot preserve their self-respect or realise that social justice and unity which all the free peoples of the world have attained. The Hindu religion and the Hindu social organisation are even today based on and regulated by notions of caste, and everywhere all Hindus except the Brahmans, have to carry the badge of unalterable inferiority. Most of the high caste Hindus have become so completely inured to this moral slavery that they cannot feel the cruel injustice and the permanent insult of the caste-scheme. Such men who are inherently incompetent to feel the glow of true freedom, self-respect and unity are at the top of most Hindu institutions and movements even today. If you will care to read the Hindu Temple Reform Bill now pending before the Punjab Legislative Assembly, which is known to be backed by the Congress members, you can easily gauge the horrible caste-mentality of the Hindu leaders even in this part of India which is the home of two of the most progressive movements—the Sikhs and the Arya Samajists. You have created a world of your own thoughts, ideals and activities and have been living in it so long that you are likely to forget the deadening grip of caste on the Hindus and all that is theirs.

The inherited institutions of caste, such as the Hindu states, the Hindu temples and Mutts, the sacred books and the Hindu scheme of social life with modern additions such as caste-based laws, the Hindu Maha Sabha, the Sanatana Dharma Sabha, the Hindu University and others stand entrenched throughout the country. Even some of your own lieutenants and immediate camp followers are known to be protagonists of caste just as you yourself were until a few years ago. Do you think that God will allow such a society to get freedom to rule itself, and others? If I were a Muslim I would oppose Hindu rule more fanatically than Mr. Jinnah, and even as an ardent Hindu, I honestly feel that unless the castes are abolished I should prefer to live in a Pakistan to living in a

Hindustan. The Muslims want Pakistan not because they are enamoured of the new idea but because they hate Hindustan. The Harijans welcome Mr. Jinnah's move not because they would become Muslims but because they hate Hindustan. The people of the South have raised the cry of Dravidistan not because they have any love for British Imperialism but because they hate Hindustan.

You want that India should be freed from foreign imperialism. I wish to suggest to you that the Indians are subject to a domestic imperialism which is a certainly more satanic than any foreign rule. It was Hindu imperialism that made India unfit for freedom; and it is the same old satanic scheme of perpetual suppression of the manliness in one's own countrymen which is at the core of India's unworthiness today. Even if the British leave the country India would not be able to preserve her national solidarity if her way of life is not revolutionised.

If India should be politically free as the free nations of the modern world, the Indian people—the Hindus, the Muslims, the Christians and others—should be as free citizens and men as the peoples of those countries. The castes are fundamentally opposed to this freedom of the individual and brotherhood of citizens. Those who fight for Indian freedom have a duty at least to proclaim to the non-Hindus and the self-respecting Hindus that in free India the people of all classes and creeds will be as free to live, work, associate and love one another as the people of England or America or China or even Japan and Germany. This would be possible only if the castes are abolished.

I beg to submit that I have made a fairly long study of this problem during a period of about 20 years of dedicated service and study and my recent book 'The Menace of Hindu Imperialism' is an attempt to expose the fundamental incompatibility of the caste-scheme with democracy, freedom and national life, and the peril that threatens India of a revival of reactionary forces. I have come to the conclusion that if the State refuses to recognise caste in any form for any purpose whatsoever, the problem will be automatically solved. Not only should India be declared free but Indians, especially the Hindus, should be declared free-born men without the stigma of caste.

I request you to make it known that in free India, the State will not recognise any classification based on birth such as the castes and that not only untouchability but the public profession of caste will be an offence, and that only such Indians as believe whole-heartedly in a brotherhood of citizens are worthy to be fighters for India's freedom.

Sd, (Swami) Dharma Theertha,

(B.A., LL. B.)

President, Hindu Missionary Society,
Krihsna Nagar, LAHORE.

(Continued from page 106)

Sikhs can be included among Hindus. Even the new Bill enumerates these as distinct from Hindus. Considering the tenets of these three religions, nobody can include them among Hindus on religious grounds. The author says that it is very important for Hindus at present to unite with Sikhs, but he also speaks in favour of Hindu-Muslim unity; so that is no argument. Though the views of the author are very advanced and I have personally nothing to say against them, the arguments in this pamphlet will be hardly acceptable to religious-minded Hindus. But perhaps the book is merely intended to warn reformers about the dangers of this Bill and get them to form a solid block against it when it comes to voting.

R. D. KARVE.

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LAW AND THEORY IN SCIENCE

By D. D. KARVE

FOR ordinary citizens the word law does not mean anything more than a set of rules adopted by the Government of the time. He knows that he must either obey the law or suffer a certain punishment—if he is detected. Naturally, these laws, being man-made, are in many cases defective and require to be modified or cancelled. In addition to these laws, there are also certain unwritten conventions of behaviour in each society, and an individual member of that society, although he may not have to fear actual punishment in the form of fine or imprisonment or worse, if he breaks any of them, will still be in danger of the general displeasure of society. These conventions are thus also a kind of law.

Law in science, however, has altogether a different significance. Suppose one or more scientists perform a large number of experiments and find that the results that they obtain are capable of some generalised statement. Then that generalised statement is called a "law" and continues to be so called as long as the results of any fresh experiments do not go contrary to it. To give an illustration: As a result of a very large number of experiments it was found that every chemical compound was always composed of the same proportions of the same elements. This was then called the law of constant proportion. Similarly the law of gravitation, (that all bodies exert a certain force of attraction on all other bodies, proportional to their mass and inversely proportional to the square of the distance between them) the laws of the conservation of mass and of energy and all other laws in science are the results of experiments.

It must however be noted that whenever the result of any new experiment is contrary to these laws, they at once become dead letters and have either to be modified so as to account for the new result or to be scrapped altogether. The history of science is full of such cases and scientists are always ready to do the needful. For, the results of careful and accurate experiments are the fundamental basis of all science.

Now when a law has been able to explain all the result of all the experiments done in that particular field, scientists try to go a step further and want to see if they

can draw a mental picture of the actual processes taking place in the particular experiment and so to "explain" the law. The word "explain" in science generally means the answering of the question "how?" A particular mental picture, which necessarily must make certain assumptions, may for a time explain how a particular law applies to a set of experiments. To take an example, it is known that gases obey certain laws, i.e., they behave in a certain definite way when their pressure, volume or temperature is changed. Thus at constant temperature, the product of the pressure and volume remains constant. Now, how is one to explain this? Clerk Maxwell, among others, suggested that this could be done if we made certain assumptions regarding the nature of gases. He suggested that gases are made up of extremely small particles which he called molecules, which were perfectly elastic, and which were in constant motion. On the basis of these assumptions, he deduced certain equations and showed that the product of pressure and volume should remain constant at constant temperature. The experimentally established law is thus explained satisfactorily on the basis of certain assumptions, which therefore are justified. The assumptions are then called a hypothesis. Generally, a hypothesis can be tested by further experiments suggested by the assumptions, and if it satisfies these further tests also, it is generally accepted and referred to not merely as a hypothesis but a theory.

Even laymen will probably have heard that when Einstein put forward his theory of relativity, it was in order to explain the results of certain experiments. Now he further stated that if his theory was accurate, i.e., if the mental picture he had drawn corresponded with reality, certain other things should be capable of observation, e.g., shifting of the lines in the spectrum, etc. Later on, observation confirmed his expectation and his theory was generally accepted by scientists.

Of course, it does not always happen this way. Sometimes, it is found that a particular theory fails to explain experimental results satisfactorily and has to be modified or thrown away altogether. Thus the essential steps in the growth of science

may be summarised as—Experiment—Generalisation or Law—Theory. The more satisfactory a theory is and the more varied the types of experimental results it explains, the more likely it is to correspond to reality.

My main intention in explaining these processes of the growth of science and therefore of an important branch of knowledge, was to show pointedly the difference in the attitude of the scientist and the charlatan or the fake. The scientist always stands firmly on the foundation of experiment, observation and independent verification. He is always aware that any theories that he may put forward are never final. They may need constant modification or replacement and knowledge can only progress by that method.

Religionists on the other hand are not only very fond of making unwarranted assumptions, but they stick to them in spite of evidence to the contrary. Take for example the assumption that the universe was created by "god". Now in the first place, no scientist has yet been able to demonstrate that matter can be "created" out of nothing. The results of all experiments so far go to show that matter can neither be created nor destroyed. It can only change its form. The correct scientific attitude must therefore be to assume that the world has not been created, but has been there always. Of course this is not a very satisfying conclusion. But one just cannot help it. But one can go even further. Even assuming for a moment, contrary to the results of all our experiments, that "god" did "create" this universe somehow, the very next question is— who created god? For, obviously, if people do not find it satisfactory to assume that the world has not been created, but has been in existence always, how in the name of reason can they make the same assumption regarding god in the very next breath? For do not think there are any believers in god, who apply the same reasoning to god and assume the existence of an unending series of gods. It will therefore be seen that the idea of god is thoroughly unscientific and no true scientist could be a believer in the existence of a god. Actually, of course, we do find scientists who are theists, and that can only be explained by the existence of logic-tight compartments in their brains. As far as

their studies and experiments are concerned, they will pay strict attention to every detail, accept only those theories that explain satisfactorily the results of all known experiments and reject the others. But once outside their laboratories, they behave like ignorant and credulous fools ready to accept even the wildest dreams as the truth. Such is the wonder of the human mind!

(Continued from page 108)

it has its joy." In the outer world of activity nature has one aspect (the law), but in our hearts, in our emotional world, it presents an altogether different picture (the Joy.) "Through our sense of truth we realize law in nature, and through our sense of beauty we realise harmony in the universe." Dante in the intensity and ecstasy of his emotion raised his "Beatrice" to a form of "Beauty Divine." Bhakta Surdas forgot the world in the delight and sweetness of the outpourings of the pangs of his own heart of separation from Krishna, and Mira kicked at the family and the censure of the world, and drank the cup of poison, forgetting herself in the love of "Girdhar Gopal",—her declared spouse. This is a truth of the world of emotion—of the world of art where man forgets himself in ecstasy. But halt! you will simply be creating confusion if you were to bring down this truth of the world of emotion and art, for application to the outer world of activity and law. No harm if moving on the plane of emotion and art, you forget yourself, your poverty and your pain, but you will be committing an inexcusable mistake if (when you descend down from the plane of emotion) you were to think that this "poverty and pain" has disappeared in reality from the actual world of activity as well. Don't be led away to think that there is really in existence any such thing as "divine beauty," "spiritual love,"—it is only an emotional sweet attachment to "the beloved one," realized in one's own "inner being," the heart, in this very life. This "believed one," "the divine beauty" too is simply an "idealized" creation of one's own imagination working in emotion, although it may be beautiful, it is joyful, and true.

I have learnt a lesson: "O man, live life wholly, fully and intensely. Why are you killing yourself—committing suicide, by living a repressed, narrow and hesitating life?"

ANCESTOR-WORSHIP AND THE INDIAN SOCIAL REFORMER

By M. A. PAI

It is really remarkable how often and how grievously some of us, who claim to be emancipated from the thralldom of old-world ideas and otherwise appear to be in the fore-front of our progressive forces allow our reason to succumb to our bred-in-the-bone 'ancestor-worship'. The *Indian Social Reformer* was founded as the exponent of the rationalist school of social reformers in India, as distinguished from those who advocated social reform on *shāstric* grounds; or as revivalists of a golden past. This organ of rationalist reformers mouths liberal sentiments often enough, but, whenever any concrete measure of social reform is proposed, may be depended on to oppose it, or to advocate a 'ca'-canny' policy, on some such grounds as the inadvisability of coercing the conservatives or wounding orthodox susceptibilities; so much so that on one occasion one of its old contributors felt obliged, in the course of a protest addressed to it, to taunt the editor of the organ with the remark that while he was doing lip-service to the principles of social reform in the abstract, he was on all concrete issues found to behave as though he had a vested interest in maintaining our social abuses, lest his occupation of 'social-reforming' should, like Othello's of soldiering, be gone, once those abuses came to be abolished!

It is not surprising, therefore, that this organ should remark, as it does in one of its recent issues (No. 17 of the current Vol. No. 52) in the course of an editorial note appended to a letter from a contributor, Mr. M. G. Joseph of Coonoor: that Mr. Nadkarni's "Rama-Rajya" offended against "the first canon of historical criticism, that the men of each period should be judged by the standards of that period" and secondly that "no one, except perhaps Gandhiji, recommends Rama-Rajya as the model for a modern state", and that "Gandhiji himself perhaps does not mean anything more by it than the reign of righteousness."

It would be difficult to conceive of a writing which compressed so great an amount

of wrong principle and mis-statement of fact in so short a compass as in this note (or foot-note) of the *Reformer*.

Public memory is proverbially short. But one did not expect the *Reformer's* memory to be so short as that. Mr. Nadkarni's book itself was provoked by the declaration made at an all-India gathering, attended by no less than four Shankaracharyas, and other Acharyas and several others of that ilk. At this conference, as stated in the preface to the book, the declaration was made on behalf of the Varanashram-dharma Swaraj Sangh: "We want Swaraj as we had it in the days of Ramachandra". The book itself is in the form of an expostulatory letter addressed to Gandhiji, as 'the greatest Hindu of the age', from a critical co-religionist of his, viz., its author. The expostulation was addressed to Mahatmaji mainly because he had expressed an injudicious leaning to Rama-rajya not in the mere or abstract sense of the rule of 'righteousness' but a 'righteousness' which demanded the desertion of a devoted wife; for, presiding over a political conference of Kathiawar States subjects early in 1925, he had advised our chiefs to follow King Rama as their ideal, mentioning in particular Rama's abandonment of Sita in order to please his subjects. On this very pronouncement of Gandhiji the *Reformer* itself took him to task in very severe terms. Let the editor of the paper look up his own past columns for the early months of the year mentioned. There then followed in its columns, I remember, a sharp controversy, in which Mr. Nadkarni took part against another contributor who had attempted a mealy-mouthed defence of Rama's conduct in the case. I wonder whether the *Reformer* has given up its old pro-Sita (or anti-Rama) position by virtue of some new revelation latterly vouchsafed to it, or because it considers consistency to be the virtue of an ass.

While such has been the *Reformer's* 'progress in the direction of the tail', Gandhiji himself seems to have made progress in the usual direction: he has come to

doubt the 'righteousness' of Rama's conduct in giving up his wife. In a compilation of his letters addressed to a female inmate of his Ashram, and translated into Marathi (under the title 'Prasadadiksha') by Acharya Kaka Kalelkar a few years ago, we find Gandhiji discouraging in this wise in the course of a letter dealing with 'public opinion':

There is 'public opinion' and 'public opinion'.

Not only has one got to sift the true from the false, but one ought, above all, to respect one's own conscience, and never to follow public opinion of the sort which outrages an enlightened conscience. In the light of this principle, Rama's conduct in deserting his Sita in deference to public opinion is morally dubious;

—and so forth! For this partial conversion of the Rama-rajist Mahatma to the stand taken by (among others) the *Reformer's* own previous avatar, Mr. Nadkarni may justly claim credit; for the said letter of Gandhiji is dated soon after Mr. Nadkarni's book was first published (first edition, 1932).

Now, how about that so-called "first canon of historical criticism", that we should judge historical worthies (or unworthies) by the standards of their own age? In the first place, are they the same or uniform for a given age? Or do the standards vary as high and low for different people, as they do in our own time? Which of the numerous and variant judgments passed on the late General Dyer of Jallianwala Bagh fame (or infamy)—from the verdicts of the House of Lords and the *Morning Post* up to those of the Indian Congress Committee appointed to report on the Punjab incidents and of the 'extremist' organs in India—may be said to reflect 'the standard of the age' in which Dyer lived?

As regards the ancient King Rama himself, don't we find that his treatment of his wife Sita has been condemned by no less a one than Valmiki, the Rishi who protected the queen in her second exile, and who is also the reputed author of the *Ramayana*? As for Rama's treatment of Vali, the aboriginal king, Mr. Nadkarni is careful to note that it also has been condemned by Vyasa in the *Mahabharata*—

as witness the quotation given on page 7 of "Rama-Rajya". Is ancestor-worshiping Mr. Natarajan wiser in his wisdom than Vyasa and Valmiki, those inspired authors of yore? Or, will he have King Rama judged not by these higher standards of our own ancients, but by the evidently lower standards of Rama's panegyrists and deifiers, ancient and modern? Did not Mr. Natarajan himself in his previous avatar, as the *de facto* (as well as *de jure*) editor of the *Reformer*, blame Rama for his desertion of his exemplary wife, when Gandhiji had set up Rama-rajya as an ideal for our princes?

Besides, are there no such things as 'eternal verities'—ethical principles, the norm of the human conscience, 'the still small voice', which is ever the same for all times and climes? I do not think the *Reformer* would answer this question in the negative.

In the second place, where would we be if we judged every successful scoundrel in history by his own standards? There would be an end to all ideas of progress in the moral or social sphere, especially if the hero happens to be worshipped as a God and his example held up to us as worthy of imitation, as was once done by Gandhiji, and as is now done by the misguided 'mentors of the masses', the protagonists of the Varnashram Swaraj Sangh. In these circumstances the *Reformer's* canon cannot be an acceptable canon; it is indeed a mischievous one.

We know how a super-bigot like Aurangzeb has been glorified by certain historians of the Aligarh school. He has even been exalted into a 'Zinda Pir', or an ever-living saint of Islam. And, judged by the theocratic standards of traditional Islam, Aurangzeb should indeed be allowed to be a worshipful hero. Now, does the *Reformer* agree with that judgment? Obviously not; for its references to Aurangzeb are nearly always uncomplimentary to the monarch, whom it never misses an opportunity of execrating as a fanatical violator of religious toleration, the basic principle of Indian rulership. We can only say that the editor of the *Reformer* not being a Muslim, the 'ancestor-worship' which impels present-day Muslim historians to vindicate (and even to glorify) Aurangzeb, does not work in his brain to smother his conscience and palliate Aurangzeb's misdeeds.

Indeed, the first canon of all criticism, whether historical or other, is the rule: *To thine own self be true*. To ask a critic to observe any other rule—any less certain rule, as the moral standard of a past age, which can only be conjectural at best—is in effect to ask him to be false to himself—false to his conscience. Such craven counsel would only be putting a premium on intellectual dishonesty. It is one thing to let the peculiar circumstances of a particular age or of a special case plead in mitigation of the severity of your judgment on a misdeed; but to let those circumstances entirely exculpate the wrong-doer is to make out black to be white. This, in effect, is what the *Reformer* would have us take as our ideal in judging popular idols,—the organ (of all organs) which has been displaying as its motto Garrison's saying: "I will be as harsh as truth, and as unpromising as justice . . . I will not excuse . . ." and all that!

Are we to judge all the glorious scoundrels of history by their own 'standard', whatever that may be? Clive, 'the forger and the founder of the British Empire in India, who died by his own hand', and Warren Hastings, the other 'strong spirit' of that Empire,—did not these worthies, in their own day, as well as afterwards, find both vindicators and condemners of their conduct among their own nationals? The great Liberal historian, Macaulay himself, has somewhere discussed and disposed of the notion, 'fatuous', as I think he calls it that we should judge famous men of past age by the standards of own age. This author-statesman gives short shrift to the supposed 'canon of historical criticism'. Far from conducing to intellectual honesty, it is calculated, in his opinion, to hinder all moral progress. In the process of formulating our judgment on the deeds of notable ancients, it is one thing to make allowance for the peculiar circumstances of their own age; but it is quite another, and a morally subversive thing, for us in our more enlightened age to make those circumstances a ground for white-washing and even glorifying all unscrupulous deeds that appear to have been eminently successful in their day. This is nothing better than 'Nietzschean' ethics.

As regards "Rama-rajya" itself, its author is not so very much concerned (as Prof. Karve has indicated in his introduc-

tion to the work in its second edition) with, 'debunking' King Rama, i.e., dislodging from his sanctified position an over-idolized hero (to whose good qualities Mr. Nadkarni does not fail to do justice); but it is two of the victims of 'Rama-rajya', viz. Sita, his wife, and Shambuka, his Sudra subject whom Mr. Nadkarni wants his co-religionists to lift on to the pedestals of religious martyrdom, and to be duly venerated,—the one as the representative of her wronged sex, and the other as the representative of suppressed castes in the polity of ancient Hindudom.

If Mr. Nadkarni has offended against any 'canon of criticism' he may be said to have done so in very good company; the company of no less worthies than Valmiki and Vyasa (among the ancients, as already mentioned) and Romesh Chunder Dutt (among the moderns, who blames Rama for his weakness in deserting his wife, as witness the quotation from Dutt's *magnum opus*, given on page 19 of 'Rama-Rajya'), and, last but not least, Mr. K. Natarajan himself in his former avatar, as already mentioned. The fact is, it is not Mr. Nadkarni who has offended against any canon, but Mr. Natarajan himself, who in his present access of 'ancestor-worship' (due perhaps to senile atavism) has let his criticism offend against his own better self,—the self of the period when his common-sense and conscience had the better of his sense of ancestor-worship. In fine, Mr. Natarajan's criticism is an uncommon lapse from common-sense.

Joan of Arc, it may be remembered, was canonized (i.e., declared to be a Saint) some 15 years ago by the Catholic Church—the same church whose own dignitaries had condemned her to be burnt at the stake as a witch in league with the Devil. Did the modern Churchmen allow themselves to be swayed by the thought that in sanctifying the supposed witch, they would be condemning as misguided, if not wicked, Joan's contemporaries, the churchmen who had sat in judgment on her and pronounced her a witch? Evidently not. But if the editor of the *Reformer* were a Roman Catholic, we might expect him to play the part of the 'Devil's advocate' and oppose the proposed canonization of Joan on the ground that it would involve an offence against 'the first canon of historical criticism' to sanctify a convicted criminal,

(Please turn to page 122)

ISLAM IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN KNOWLEDGE

By **ATIB USMANI**

SOMEBODY once said, "Religion not only makes men and women servile but it has the supreme art of teaching them to love their chains". That they actually love their "chains" is hard to imagine, but one thing is certain that Religion makes them so much obsessed with the pleasures of a future life, or at least with the freedom from the pains of the present, that they forget the very existence of their "chains." This is more than ever true for the India of today. While her common enemies, poverty, disease, and the ingrained communalism, are robbing her of her last defences and while her identity as a single country is threatened, she lies insensible. Her opiate is Religion.

Although much has been written in these pages by various freethinkers regarding Hinduism, Christianity, and other religions, and it has been shown that Religion forms a most serious obstacle in the way of attaining prosperity and freedom for our country, little has been said about Islam. It appears that most of them avoid criticising Islam because of the alleged intolerance of the followers of that religion. It is true that the Muslim does not tolerate derision and sarcasm in matters of religion, but if you try to approach him with a sympathetic and constructive attitude, he will be found perhaps more reasonable than the serious follower of any other religion.

In this article I shall endeavour to show to the Muslims that Islam, like any other religion based on authority and tradition, fails to stand a critical analysis in the light of modern human knowledge and common-sense and must be replaced by a system of philosophy and ethics—consistent with human knowledge and experience—known as Rationalism.

Before proceeding with the criticism, I want to make it clear what Rationalism is. It is not merely a negation of Religion. It is a positive attitude of mind. Some people imagine that Rationalism is equivalent to Atheism, but they ought to know

that Atheism is only a part of it—Rationalism is Atheism plus something more. Perhaps Atheism is the first step towards Rationalism: the former creates in the mind what may be figuratively termed a vacuum while Rationalism is that which occupies it when the religious beliefs and ideas have been eliminated. The positive part of Rationalism will be discussed towards the end of this article.

In the following discussion some of the well-known Koranic doctrines have been stated and examined in the light of human knowledge and common-sense.

Let us begin with the question of the existence of the Universe: How did the universe come into existence? Human knowledge today has no answer to this question, nor, it must be admitted, need we bother about it. However, according to the Koran, God created the universe. The Koran tells us that God is the "Sole maker of the Heavens and the Earth. And when he decreeth a thing, He saith to it, 'Be', and it is there;" (Sura II v3). The question naturally arises: What are the attributes of this God, and can He create something out of nothing? The first part of the question is amply answered in the Koran. God is invisible, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, with a series of man-like traits such as capability of anger, mercy, revenge, etc. But as I shall have occasion to point out later, folly and wickedness are not among God's attributes.

Now the presence of a formless supreme consciousness—that is what the Islam God amounts to—has not been experienced by any normal-minded human being. But a believing Muslim would seriously object to this statement and will contend that the Prophet Mohammad, who was only a human being, did experience God; and it was by God that the Koran was revealed to him. According to the Koran, "Verily the Koran is no other than a revelation revealed to him (Mohammad)" (Sura LIII v4), the angel Gabriel interceding between him and God.

However, for the sake of discussion let us grant that God did communicate with the Prophet and employed Gabriel as His messenger. But since we are told that God is omnipresent ("We know what his soul whispereth within him, and we are closer to him than his neck-vein." Sura L, v15.), what was the necessity for him to employ a third "person" to communicate with Mohammad? The hypothesis of Gabriel being the messenger of God introduces the idea of distance between God and the human being with whom he chooses to communicate, and not only reduces God to a finite being but also takes away his two most important attributes, omnipresence and omnipotence. Again the well-known narrative of the Prophet's Night-Journey when he was transported to the seventh heaven and beyond the Sidrah tree, a tree beyond which neither men nor angels can pass, to converse with God, gives further support to the idea of God being finite. The verse 27 confirms this: "He it is who created for you all that is on Earth, then He ascended to Heaven, and as seven heavens did He fashion it." Further we find a very striking thing in every religion based on revelation including Islam. There has always been one single individual who happened to bring to others the news of God having communicated with man. Why has only one person at a time and never two or more simultaneously experienced God, and why don't the experiences of one tally with those of others, if all of them have communicated with the same formless supreme consciousness? The common-sense inference is that either there are more Gods than one, or the alleged supernatural experiences of the different individuals had no reality outside their own imagination.

Now let us consider the second part of the question: Can He create something out of nothing? That nothing can be created out of nothing will be seen from the following argument, to grasp which some knowledge of physics, chemistry, and perhaps psychology is necessary.

The universe is a panorama of the interplay of matter and space upon the consciousness of the human mind. Therefore in order that the universe be objectively perceived, a human mind is necessary. Yet mind as an entity detached from matter

and space has not been experienced by a mind still depending on matter and space. In other words a man cannot see, hear, feel or think without a head and therefore cannot know that the universe is existing. (This point will be elaborated at a later stage where the question of the existence of the soul is discussed.) Hence all the natural phenomena reduce to matter and space in the last analysis and we need not go beyond these to seek the explanation of any observed fact.

Matter consists of ultra-microscopic particles known as molecules. The molecules are made of still smaller particles known as atoms. The atoms in their turn are formed of electrons and their homologues*. Whatever their nature one fact stands supreme, that fresh electrons and their homologues can neither be created nor have they been observed coming into existence out of nothingness. And since they are the ultimate bricks, so to say, of matter, we can say that nothing can either be created or annihilated. But somebody might very well say that the electrons and their homologues may have been ordered into existence by God in some past age. If I were writing this article at the time when human knowledge was limited to the existence of molecules only, and atoms were not even thought of, the theologians of that time would have said that God created the molecules. So we see that the answer that God created a thing, be it matter, molecules, atoms, or the electric vibrations is in fact no answer at all. It shifts the problem a step further and is simply a way of concealing our ignorance. There are questions to which human knowledge at present has no answer, but to place a God at every limit of human knowledge means deceiving oneself and misleading others. Not only one God but even an infinite series of Gods cannot settle these questions. Hence God simply does not enter, into the scheme of things, and is clearly irrelevant.

Having established the irrelevancy of God for the universe in general we come down to earth. The question of life and its origin on earth has engaged some of the finest minds of the past and the present.

* The word "homologue" is used to avoid a number of physical concepts which can be of no interest to the reader. The word has nothing to do with the chemical homologues.

and we shall now examine this matter. The Koran tells us (Sura XXXVIII v 71-80), "When thy Lord said to angels 'I am about to create a man of clay; when therefore I have formed him and breathed of my own spirit into him, then worshiping fall down before him.' And the angels prostrated themselves all of them in a body save Eblis. He swelled with pride and became an unbeliever. 'O Eblis,' said God, 'What hindereth thee from prostrating thyself before him whom I have created with mine own hands?' He said, 'I am more excellent than he; me hast thou made of fire: but of clay hast Thou created him.'" And when Adam and his wife disobeyed God they were banished from Heaven. Thus originated human beings. Birds, beasts, reptiles and insects were created by God separately for the "Benefit" of mankind. But the sum total of human knowledge in this direction absolutely contradicts this Koranic story of man's creation. Those who have already studied biology will find the following discussion perfectly convincing, and those who are not acquainted with this subject will find some popular work on biology of immense help.

Everybody knows that living things differ from the non-living things in that the former are capable of movement, assimilation, and reproduction while the latter are not. At present nothing is known about the way in which non-living matter gave rise to the living matter on earth. Only a living form can give rise to another similar living form, and life has not been observed to spring from the non-living. However, it is definitely known that human beings (also other living beings) have not been always of the same shape. What represents the man, say, of a million years ago, was not at all like the man as we know him at present. He was an ugly, hairy, low-browed animal resembling a tail-less monkey and he took generations to be transformed into the 'highbrow' man of today. This process of change is known as Evolution. It is a fact that Organic Evolution, as it is termed by the biologists, has taken place. Yet some of the otherwise highly educated persons are signally ignorant of this fact and at its very mention before them they burst out triumphantly, "Oh, but organic evolution has been disproved!" They ought to know that the fact of evolution has not been, and can

never be, disproved, for the simple reason that it is a fact. What has been disputed,—not disproved—and what they have unfortunately come to confuse with it, is Darwin's theory of evolution. It is Darwin's theory i.e., the way in which evolution took place that is disputed by some of the biologists and new theories put forward in its place. But the fact of evolution stands as firm as ever because it is founded on material evidence accessible to anyone who is willing to obtain it. Perhaps the most direct evidence of evolution derives from the study of embryology. However its discussion will be beyond the scope of this article.

To return to the Koranic answer that God made Adam of clay with his own hands: two things strike us as most remarkable. These are the words "clay" and "hands". Had these words occurred in any other book they might have been passed over as figures of speech or, at worst, errors. But their occurrence in the Koran gives them a special significance. It is very well known that clay hardly forms any considerable portion of the substance of the human body, nothing to speak of its being made wholly of it! And with "hands" are we to understand that the omnipotent God required hands to manufacture Adam? Why could He not simply call him into existence? The inevitable inference is that the Koranic story of man's creation is absurd, and has to be rejected as such.

While discussing the question of life, the Islamic story of the birth of Jesus must be mentioned. The Koran tells us about the mother of Jesus, (Sura XIX v16) "She went apart from her family to a place eastward and took a veil to shroud herself from them: and we sent our spirit to her, and he appeared before her like a perfect man. She said, 'I fly for refuge from thee to the God of Mercy, if thou fearest him:' He said, 'I am only a messenger of thy Lord, that I may bestow on thee a holy son.' She said 'How Shall I have a son, when man hath not touched me and I am not unchaste?' He said, 'So shall it be.' And she conceived him (Jesus) and retired to a far-off place." And thus Jesus was born without a father. This is absolutely contrary to the facts of biology which show that for the birth of a human offspring from the human female, a sperm derived from a human male is essential, and without it conception is impossible. Therefore

either Jesus was never born and the story is merely fictitious, or it is wrong to say that Jesus did not have a father.

Having established Atheism in the realm of the universe and of life we come to the three most important dogmas of the Koran on which Islam is based, namely, Life after Death, the Day of Judgment, the Heaven and Hell. Sura XLV v25 says, "God giveth you life, then causeth you to die : then will He assemble you for the day of Resurrection."

According to the dogma of Life after Death, when a man dies the "active principle" of his body leaves it. This is known as "soul". That anything actually leaves the body when it dies is not borne out by human experience and knowledge. Life is the function of the body and when it ceases to function we say it is dead, just as ticking is the function of the clock and when it ceases to tick we say it has stopped. Now if nothing is broken or worn out in the clock it can be started again. Winding is to a clock what food is to a human being. Similarly if every part of a human body is undamaged, as it happens when a man dies of suffocation or shock, for example, it can be brought back to functioning, that is, to life. *Dead bodies have been revived.* However, a body that dies of disease or injury cannot be made to function again. Its case is analogous to that of a clock one or more parts of which have become worn out or broken and which consequently cannot be re-started. It is impossible that an undamaged body should ever cease to function. And if by accident it ceases to function even though quite undamaged, it can invariably be revived with proper help before, of course, damage has started in the form of putrefaction. Hence it is obvious that nothing leaves the body when it is dead. The popular belief that the consciousness of a man survives when his physical form is destroyed gives rise to the highly fantastic idea of a thinking and walking vacuum and is absolutely impossible. As we have already seen the mind cannot exist apart from the brain (a material thing). Therefore there can be no life after death.

The Day of Judgment has been variously described in the Koran in different Suras and the descriptions are frequently contradictory. However the main idea is that the universe will come to an end and all

the human beings that were born will be resurrected and summoned before God for the judgment of their beliefs and actions in their previous lives. Then they shall be consigned to Hell or admitted into Paradise according to their deserts.

Let us examine this in the light of known facts. First, whether the universe would ever come to an "end" or not, nobody knows ; yet one thing is certain, that immeasurably before the universe becomes a whit different from what it is to-day, the earth would cease to be fit for the existence of human beings and other living beings generally. Second, the idea of resurrection is untenable because the existence of the soul has been shown to be impossible. But for the sake of discussion let us assume that there shall be a day of judgment exactly as the Muslims believe, and that there are places like Heaven and Hell. What criterion is there to determine whether a person deserves to go to Hell or to Heaven? On this point every Muslim is expected to take the Koran as the sole authority. The Koran tells us, "Verily the true religion with God is Islam," (Sura III v17). "But they who believe not, and treat our signs as falsehood shall be the companions of the Fire ; in it they shall remain for ever," (Sura II v37). "But they who have believed and done the things that be right, these shall be the inmates of Paradise—there to abide for ever," (Sura II v76). Here I will put a question to every Muslim : Why is a Muslim a Muslim and an unbeliever an unbeliever to-day? It will have to be admitted that a Muslim is so because he was born of Muslim parents, and an unbeliever is so because his parents were unbelievers. Therefore none of them can be held responsible for his own religious beliefs. But some would advance the plea that every unbeliever should make a comparative study of all the religions and decide for himself which is the "true" religion. In the first place people have done so and found Islam unsatisfactory. Secondly, the struggle for existence of the present times hardly allows any one to undertake such an elaborate study. Moreover what about the peoples who live in the dense tropical forests and the eskimos of the polar regions who must be unaware of the very existence of Islam? Does justice demand that they should suffer the torments of Hell for ever for no fault of

their own? But the argument does not end here. In Sura LXXIV v54 we are told, "Nay verily this Koran is a warning, and who so will, beareth it in mind; but not unless God please will they bear it in mind." Further in v34, same Sura, "Thus God misleadeth whom he will, and whom He will doth guide aright." And again in Sura X v99-100, we have, "But if thy Lord had pleased, verily all those who are on the earth would have believed. No soul can believe but by the permission of God." Obviously neither man nor the much accursed Satan, but God himself is responsible for the beliefs and actions of everybody. It is He who first makes a person err and then sends him to Hell because he has erred. Can we imagine God, the eternal Goodness and Wisdom, to be guilty of such gross folly, nay, deliberate wickedness? But I may remind the readers that according to the Koran folly and wickedness are not among God's attributes. For wickedness and folly to be the counterparts of goodness and wisdom is unthinkable. Hence the logical conclusion: God does not exist; the Day of Judgment, the Heaven and Hell, are pure fictions.

Unfortunately Islam is also opposed to the ideal of a universal brotherhood of man. Its teachings in respect of the dealings of Muslims with non-Muslims are of the most pernicious kind. I will give here a few quotations from the Koran to prove this. "O believers! take not unbelievers for friends rather than believers. Do ye wish to furnish God with clear right to punish you?" (Sura IV v143). "Let not believers take unbelievers for their friends rather than believers; who so doth this hath nothing to hope from God—unless indeed ye fear a fear from them." (Sura III v270.) "And fight in the cause of God; and know that God is He who beareth, knoweth." (Sura II v245). The teaching of these lines is self-evident.

Why, the question arises, should we find all these contradictions and absurdities in a book like the Koran intended for guidance of mankind? History alone supplies the answer. Every great man is the product of his time and his work necessary for that time. Nobody who has studied the Koran with an unbiased mind can doubt the greatness and sincerity of the man who produced it. Thomas Carlyle says, "I confess I can make nothing of the critic,

in these times, who would accuse Mohammad of deceit premeditated; of conscious deceit generally or perhaps at all; still more, of living in a mere element of conscious deceit, and writing this Koran as a forger and juggler would have done! Every candid eye, I think will read the Koran far otherwise than so Sincerity, in all senses, seems to me the merit of the Koran." But the Koran was written about one-thousand-and three-hundred years ago and human knowledge has greatly advanced in every direction during this interval. Today the doctrines and teachings of the Koran do not hold. Islam like any other religion based on authority and tradition has outlived its necessity. Humanity requires something rational, consistent with modern knowledge and requirements. This is Rationalism.

Now I will briefly discuss the positive part of Rationalism. Rationalism teaches one to judge every human institution in the light of reason and common sense bereft of all dogmas and authorities. It places morality on a solid foundation, a system of ethics evolved in the light of psychology, sociology, history, and capable of revision and adjustment in accordance with the ecological changes in life. It dispels ignorance, superstition, and fear of an imaginary supernatural being and makes man master of his own conduct. Religion to-day means nothing but a systemic cultivation of ignorance by suppression of knowledge, and exists only for the personal good and glory of the cunning few who exploit the suffering masses for their own selfish ends. Rationalism in the long run seeks to destroy every "ism" based on authority and selfishness and to establish a universal brotherhood of man by establishing the supremacy of Reason.

To-day, while war is raging in the world, India requires the philosophy of Rationalism. Rationalism promises to make every man and woman in India fit for fighting the common enemies of our country, that is poverty, disease, and the most dangerous of them all, the manufacture of mass minds as practised by persons like Savarkar, Jinnah, and their brand. Rationalism alone can awaken India from the stupor in which she has fallen under the opiate of Religion, and make her alive to the "chains" that hold her in physical and moral slavery.

(Note.—The quotations in this Article are from Rodwell's Koran.—The Author.)

FORUM

An Open Letter to

Dr. A. K. PILLAY, Q.B.E., M.B.B.S.,

Author of "The Art of Love and Sane Sex Living."

Dear Sir,

On page 184 of your book you say "In the early months of pregnancy coitus should not be indulged in by women with a tendency to aborton Full and New Moon days." This means that abortions are more likely on these days, and my query is "Where is the evidence for this?" If some cases of abortion occur on these days, that does not prove any causal relation or correlation, unless one finds that abortions are markedly less on other days of the month.

You may perhaps ask "Where is the evidence that abortions do not occur in a greater measure on these days?" But it should be remembered that the onus of proof is always on the party that makes the positive statement. However, to make out a *prima facie* case against your statement, I wish to mention that I examined the dates of about fifty cases of abortion in the records of the Sassoon Hospital in Poona and did not find that abortion cases were more frequent on or about Full and New Moon days.

Poona,
5-6-42.

Yours faithfully,
R. J. Gokhale.

TAKE NO CHANCES

THANKSGIVING

My long delayed and most grateful thanks to Mount Mary, St. Anthony, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Dadar-Hormusjed, Ratha-Krishna and Satya Narayan, for having brought my dearest safe to me from his voyage.—T. H.

Dear Sir,

I enclose an item from the *Times of India* (26th June) in its domestic columns. The grateful individual obviously wanted to take no chances and thanks the gods in the Christian, Parsee and Hindu pantheons for having brought his dearest safe from his voyage. But is he quite sure that Allah or Buddha had nothing to do with this happy event? They are likely to be offended by this neglect and may do harm on the next occasion. The sentiment of enmity is always more powerful than the sentiment of friendliness.

Poona.
27-6-42.

Yours etc.
R. P. Paranjpye.

RATIONALISM IN ACTION

Sir,

It is high time that Rationalists realise the need of helping their rationalist friends in all possible ways. This help need not be and I think should not be monetary and by way of charity. That would be degrading. But there are scores of ways of Rationalists helping each other reciprocally. Many elderly Rationalists are forced to send their children to schools where there is little of Rationalism especially if the schools happen to be denominational. Parents under such circumstances can employ Rationalist graduates and undergraduates as private tutors for their children. The value and advantage to both parties is obvious. Further there are many unem-

ployed or underpaid Rationalists who would be glad to have a Rationalists' Co-operative Producers as well as Consumers' Society at least in big cities in India. There can be a Rationalists' Emporium where products of small-scale industries like cream, snow, oils, syrups, etc., from Rationalists can be stored and sold to other Rationalists on commission basis, the commission going to the Association Funds. It is by now accepted that no fool can be a Rationalist. To be a Rationalist one has to have the piercing intelligence of a powerful nature to tear the mask of stupidity and hypocrisy and tradition which has surrounded him since his birth. Such intelligence should not be allowed to brood over the problem of the next meal. This misery can be avoided if Rationalists co-operate with each other in economic matters. Further, individual enterprise by one Rationalist should be "religiously" patronised by all other Rationalists in the city or town. If a Rationalist were to start a shop, the other Rationalists can be certain that they can get full value for their money by helping a Rationalist friend to help himself. There are scores of such measures which if put into effect will go a long way to lessen the worries of each other. Well-to-do Rationalists can get all their household supplies through the agency of their Rationalist friends and average persons also can give the 'monopoly' of supplies of their family requirements to those of the Rationalists who are willing to benefit by such measures. And a Rationalist is not a mere debater always fighting with the superstitious or religious exploiters. A Rationalist is a Rationalist, an individual who uses reason more than any other faculty to the best advantage in every phase of his existence. As such, as a rational being, he will not find indignity in helping other Rationalists with the best of goods and helping himself besides by being an honest merchant and agent. Rationalists ask for no charity. All they say is that worth for worth they expect other rationalists to give them a preference.

It will be a good start if the Rationalists of Bombay city help you with information as regards the services they need from and the services they can render to their Rationalist friends. Rationalists from the other parts of India can also be helped to establish commercial contact with Bombay Firms. If the idea is sound and proves practicable and if it catches the rational imagination of our friends, the Rationalist Association can set up an Advisory Committee for such matters and its Secretary can help to establish contact or act as agent between Rationalist business and commercial enterprise outside Bombay and Bombay concerns on a Commission basis. In short if Rationalist friends determine to prefer as far as possible the help of a Rationalist to the help of another in all possible services like medical, educational and commercial, there will be all-round benefit to all concerned.

Bombay,
19-7-42.

Yours etc.

Realist-Rationalist."

Your Association is really doing a great service towards bringing about the Indian Renaissance. It will soon make a breach in the citadel of orthodoxy and revivalism if we all exert ourselves.

Gopinath.

Probably you will be surprised to read this letter as it comes to you from a distant corner. I have been reading *Reason* with great interest and often I think that the size should be double. I am carrying on propaganda for the R.A.I. here and pass on my copy of *Reason* to at least about 20 persons. Last month I had gone on a short tour to Bhavnagar. In one of its villages called Ghadhada which is famous for its Swaminarayan Temple, a temple where 300 persons, all able bodied, are fed morn, noon and night, without any fees, a temple the inside of which is bedecked with gold bullion. I met one old gentleman an author of half-a-dozen 'spiritual' books, well versed in Bengalee, Sanskrit, etc. I discussed with him the aims of the R.A.I. and the foundations on which we are standing and the fight we are carrying on against the conventional dogmas of religion. In spite of his age and his learnings towards spiritualism he agreed with me in toto and was very much pleased about our work. I have sent him all my copies of *Reason*. The old gentleman has a large family consisting of nearly 50 members, sons, grandsons, grand daughters, etc., etc. The old gentleman's interest in Rationalism will influence his whole family which I am sure will greatly help the Rationalist cause. Wishing you every success.

Viramgam,
12-5-42.

G. F. Thaver.

NEW LIFE

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Shakuntala Jaspal,	"Vulgarity in Life"

SPECIAL SECTION OF STUDENTS' ACTIVITIES FROM ALL OVER INDIA

Bara Dari Tower, University of Lucknow,
Lucknow, U.P.

(Continued from page 115)

since such action would, by necessary implication, be the condemnation of her contemporary churchmen judges as misguided, if not wicked!

As for the canonization of Sita and Shambuka, the process may be said to be fairly on the way to fulfilment, if not already fulfilled through an event that took place in the month of November, 1940. In the first week of this month, at a Pan-Hindu Conference convened at Karwar, Mr. Nadkarni's home-town, a new Smriti for the new age was promulgated, as a document which is to take its place as the New Testament of Hinduism (or, indeed, of religion in general). Towards the end of this Smriti there occurs what may be termed a hagiology of Hinduism, i.e., an enumeration of the Saints and Sages of India from the most ancient times down to the date of the Conference (only dead worthies being commemorated), and in this enumeration figure the two martyrs of Rama-rajya, viz., Sita and Shambuka, while Rama also is not excluded from the list of the worthies; only he is placed *after* the martyrs. For this enumeration follows a declaration to the effect that the instruction contained in the Smriti is "in accordance with the best that is in the lives and words of Bharata Saints and Sages of the past", and Rama has claims for inclusion because he was one of those worthies from whose lives we have to learn much, nearly as much as from the lives of the two martyrs mentioned.

(Continued from page 115)

will enable students to think for themselves. If that attitude is created it can be left to them to attack and reject that which we want them to reject. Whoever tackles the problems must be one who is fully aware of the genuine difficulties of Indian students which prevent them from thinking in a straight forward and questioning manner. I am not one of those who think that students are too immature to consider problems which affect the lives of whole nations. As it is right and proper that our own viewpoint should be put before them now rather than at a time when going back upon what they felt before would be prevented by questions of prestige and habits.